



PM chairs meeting on state-owned land classification plans
Page 2



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10 juveniles among 56 in visa violation sweep

Kuwait industrial areas under watch as labor checks intensify

By Munif Naif
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Juvenile Protection Unit at the Criminal Investigation General Department in the Interior Ministry conducted a joint security campaign with the Public Authority for Manpower (PAM).

The campaign was carried out in Jahra Industrial Area, Shuwaikh Industrial Area,

Fahaheel Industrial Area and Farwaniya, as part of ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with the Labor Law and related regulations.

This led to the arrest of 56 individuals proven to have committed violations, including 10 juveniles, three individuals with family visa (Article 22), 17 individuals with private sector work visa (Article 18), 24 individuals with domestic worker visa (Article 20), one domestic worker who was reported absconding, and one individual on visit visa.

All the necessary legal and administrative measures were taken against those arrested during the campaign.

Kuwait heat surge to peak at 50°C as humid haze lingers

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): Acting Director of the Meteorological Department Dharar Al-Ali said the country is experiencing hot winds and relative humidity, causing reduced horizontal visibility in coastal areas due to light fog. However, relative humidity is expected to gradually decrease as winds shift to northwesterly directions.

Al-Ali explained to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) that the country is being affected by an extension of a surface low-pressure system accompanied by an extremely hot and humid air mass, particularly in coastal areas. Southeasterly to variable light and moderate winds are blowing at speeds ranging between 8 and 35 kilometers per hour.

Maximum temperatures across the country range between 46 and 48 degrees Celsius, with reduced horizontal visibility in coastal areas due to light fog.

The winds will be moderate and may become occasionally active in open areas, reaching speeds of up to 45 kilometers per hour. These conditions are expected to continue in the coming days, with maximum temperatures reaching 50 degrees Celsius at Kuwait International Airport.

Al-Ali expected winds to shift back to southeasterly

Continued on Page 5



Photo by Samer Shqair

Beneath a sky blurred by heat and humidity, motorists press on through Kuwait's roads as the Liberation Tower stands as a sentinel over the city.



Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, KPC CEO

Forbes names KPC CEO as Kuwait's top chief executive

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) Sheikh Nawaf Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah was named by Forbes on Wednesday as the country's top chief executive, according to the magazine's annual list of the Middle East and North Africa region's most influential CEOs.

The KPC CEO was also named the fourth top chief executive in the Middle East and North Africa region, the state-owned oil firm said in a press release, citing the Forbes list.

The 2026 list includes 102 business leaders from 21 countries in the region's most influential firms.

Kuwait's KD 3.1 bln push builds economic resilience

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Ministry of Finance has transformed accounting figures into a developmental shield, strengthening the economic system against ongoing geopolitical challenges.

This was achieved by increasing the budget allocated for construction and infrastructure projects in the 2026/2027 fiscal year budget to KD 3.1 billion, up from KD 2.24 billion in the previous fiscal year.

In this regard, former advisor to the Ministry of Finance and economic expert Mohammed Ramadan confirmed to the daily that the increase in capital expenditures allocated for construction and infrastructure projects in the 2026/2027 budget played a significant role in enhancing the resilience of Boursa Kuwait in the face of geopolitical challenges.

He pointed out that the increase of approximately 860 million dinars compared to last year's budget dispelled deflationary concerns and established a new phase of structural economic hedging capable of addressing regional instability by strengthening the state's operational assets.

Ramadan noted that the Ministry of Finance has succeeded in increasing capital spending, which has revitalized the operational activities of listed companies and banks.

He stressed that the growing volume of projects will encourage companies to borrow from banks, thereby supporting economic growth and positively impacting Boursa Kuwait.

Meanwhile, economic expert Ahmed Al-Hajri stated that accelerating the implementation of major development projects represents the first line of defense for monetary stability.

Continued on Page 5

Continued on Page 5

Day by Day

EXPLORING people's minds and personalities is one of the most enjoyable pursuits. Sometimes, understanding these thoughts and traits awakens a person and sets them on a different path in life.

Someone once thought for a while, then scratched his head and said, "The real waste is spending \$10 to stimulate your mind to produce an idea worth less than \$2."

That's how life is - Some people are born to think, while others are born to enjoy the thoughts and inventions of others. The latter spend more time asleep than awake.

... Yet tomorrow is another day.

Zahed Matar

Last lease on broker licenses

By Marwa Al-Bahrawi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has extended the validity of freelance business licenses (home-based licenses) for real estate brokerage activities by one month, allowing license holders additional time to regularize their operations.

These licenses will permanently cease to be valid on September 1, 2026.

Head of the Real Estate Brokers Union Imad Haidar explained that home-based licenses were originally scheduled to expire on August 1. However, the union appealed to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to grant an extension, allowing license

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait, Thailand enter new era of strategic partnership

By Fares Ghaleb
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Ambassador of Thailand to Kuwait Songchai Chaipatiyut disclosed that the Kuwaiti-Thai relationship is entering a new phase of development, building on 63 years of diplomatic ties based on mutual trust and respect.

Speaking to the newspaper, Chaipatiyut affirmed that both countries aspire to elevate the level of their cooperation from a traditional trade partnership to a strategic partnership covering food security, investment, healthcare, education and tourism in line with the objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035.

He revealed that the volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached about \$947 million in 2025, while Thailand welcomed

around 87,000 Kuwaiti visitors last year. He confirmed the ongoing efforts to expand bilateral cooperation, increase direct flights, and attract more joint investments.

He stated that this is an opportune time for Kuwait and Thailand to work together to achieve a lot, not only for their citizens, but also for the world in general.

He added that the relationship between Kuwait and Thailand, spanning more than six decades of friendship, have witnessed numerous milestones, including significant developments in diplomatic relations at the highest level. He pointed out the deep mutual respect between the leadership of the two countries, which is based on close ties between their peoples.

He indicated that two years after

Continued on Page 5

Kuwait, Japan cultivate sustainability ties

Minister of State for Development and Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulaj met Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait Ken-ichiro Mukai on Wednesday to discuss environmental cooperation, sustainability and food security.

Al-Fulaj told KUNA the meeting reviewed opportunities to

strengthen partnership and exchange expertise in support of environmental sustainability.

The talks also covered cooperation in agricultural production, food supply chains and other issues of mutual interest, contributing to the development goals of the two friendly countries. (KUNA)



EPA photo

Kuwait's Minister of State for Development and Sustainability receives Japanese Ambassador to Kuwait.

NewsWatch

NEW YORK: US President Donald Trump said the Strait of Hormuz would reopen "very soon," warning Iran that the US would take strong military action if a deal is not reached.

"The Strait is going to be open very soon - or they're gonna hit very hard, and then the Strait is going to be open," he told reporters before departing Los Angeles late Tuesday following a Republican National Committee fundraising event, according to Fox News. (KUNA)

LONDON: A woman, 47, was arrested for stabbing four men in Covent Garden in central London, said the Metropolitan Police on Wednesday.

The police added that the men, aged 34, 39, 42, and 52, were transported to hospital after the incident, which occurred in Endell Street at around 12:30 pm local-time.

There are no further details about the incident; however, the woman was arrested on suspicion of possession of an offensive weapon and assault. (KUNA)

National Investments Company Delivers Strong Performance, Reporting Net Profit of KD 12.3 Million and Earnings per Share of 15.4 Fils for Q2 2026

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait Group holds H1 2026 analyst conference call



Prayer Timings

Fajr 03:44 Asr 15:30
Sunrise .. 05:11 Maghrib .. 18:37
Zohr 11:54 Isha 20:04



His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chairs the meeting.

PM chairs meeting on state-owned land classification plans

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): His Highness Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah chaired a meeting on Wednesday to discuss the latest developments in plans to survey and classify state-owned lands, aiming to enhance government asset management efficiency, support food security and align

with national development goals.

The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Municipal Affairs and Minister of State for Housing Abdullatif Al-Mishari, Minister of Electricity, Water and Renewable Energy Dr. Subaih Al-Mukhaizeem, Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai,

Minister of State for Economic Affairs and Investment Abdulaziz Al-Marzuq, Acting Chief of the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikh Khaled Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Managing Director of the Kuwait Investment Authority Sheikh Saud Al-Sabah, and other senior officials.



KUNA photo

Kuwait's Ambassador to Malta, Meshal Al-Mudhaf meets with Maltese Minister for Foreign and European Affairs Chris Fearné.

Kuwaiti envoy, Maltese FM review tensions in region, to bolster ties

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): Kuwait's Ambassador to Malta, Meshal Al-Mudhaf discussed on Tuesday with Maltese Minister for Foreign and European Affairs Chris Fearné international developments of common concern, primarily the geopolitical situation in the Middle East.

In a statement sent to KUNA, the embassy said that Ambassador Al-Mudhaf also discussed with the Foreign Minister the distinguished relations between the two friendly countries and efforts exerted to bolster bilateral alignment and exploring broader avenues for trade, economic, and security cooperation between the two friendly nations.

Both sides resolved to scale up academic and scientific partnerships, agreeing to broaden scholarship frameworks and diversify fields of study for Kuwaiti scholars at the University of Malta.

The embassy noted that 154 Kuwaiti students are currently matriculated in Maltese institutions, overwhelmingly concentrated in advanced medical specialties.

Other Voices

Arab and other Jews

By Ahmad alsarraf

In a relatively old interview, an Iraqi-Israeli Haim Sofer said, "The Jews of Iraq never wanted to leave, even after the establishment of Israel in 1948. They were well-off and fully integrated into Iraqi society, alongside Muslims and Christians.



alsarraf

However, waves of attacks, murders, and the burning of their homes and property eventually forced them to emigrate. The majority emigrated to Israel, while the wealthy and educated emigrated to Britain and the United States. Later, everyone discovered that Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency, was behind the murders and arson attacks they had suffered, intending to terrorize them and force them to emigrate to Israel."

Yakov Rabkin, an Israeli assistant professor of history, says describing Jews as "aliens" is a common characterization, especially in Europe, even today. This did not apply to the Jews of Iran, who had lived there for more than 2,500 years and never considered themselves strangers. The Jews of Arab and Islamic countries had no role, however minor, in the emergence of the idea of a national homeland or Zionist ideology. It was a purely European concept.

A large segment of Iraqi Jews refused to immigrate to Israel, even after the signing of an agreement between the Israeli government and the Iraqi monarchy in 1948. Israeli leaders then resorted to murder and terror to force them to emigrate.

Jews in Egypt and Morocco suffered from this terror, as Israel killed many Arab Jews to encourage others to emigrate. The following documents reveal these claims.

Herzl, the father of Zionism, wrote in his diaries that antisemitism, or hatred of Jews, was one of the most sincere ideas serving Israel. He said the more Jews felt vulnerable to hostility in their homelands, the more likely they were to emigrate to Israel. He also wrote that the enemies of the Jews were Israel's most loyal friends without realizing it.

Jewish minorities have lived in India since ancient times, particularly in Kochi and Mumbai. Some Iraqi Jews also migrated to India and settled there.

In China, there is a small but long-established Jewish community in Kaifeng that has existed for centuries and gradually integrated into Chinese society.

There are also Jewish communities in Bukhara, Tajikistan, the Caucasus, Georgia, and among the Mountain Jews of Dagestan and Azerbaijan. Ethiopia is home to another ancient and historically isolated Jewish community, although most of its members have emigrated to Israel. Jewish communities also emerged in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of Latin America, including Mexico, Brazil, and the Caribbean.

In North America, the first Jewish community arrived in New York in 1654 from the Netherlands. Small Jewish communities of mostly Baghdadi origin also settled in Singapore and Burma.

For thousands of years, Jews have lived as minorities in dozens of different societies and have never constituted a single, homogeneous, or unified community. This is one of the most important social issues affecting the Jewish community in Israel.



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KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): Minister of State for Sustainability Dr. Reem Al-Fulaij praised the Cabinet's decision regarding the "Government Environmental Sustainability Reporting System" initiative.

She affirmed that the adoption represents an important national step toward embedding sustainability in government work, enhancing governance and transparency, and improving environmental performance efficiency across government entities.

In a statement to KUNA on Tuesday, Minister Al-Fulaij said the system aims to establish a unified government framework for preparing annual reports that measure the



Dr. Al-Fulaij

environmental performance of government entities and monitor their compliance with sustainability indicators.

She noted that the system would provide accurate and measurable data, identify areas for improvement, enhance resource-use efficiency, and support data-driven decision-making.

Al-Fulaij added that the Cabinet's assignment of her, in her capacity as supervisor of the Environment Public Authority, to coordinate with relevant government entities and follow up on their efforts related to the system's

implementation plan reflects the state's commitment to transforming sustainability into an institutional practice based on measurement, monitoring and continuous development.

She noted that the coming phase will involve cooperation with concerned entities to determine mechanisms for preparing reports, monitoring performance indicators and assessing the implementation status of each entity, in preparation for submitting an annual report to the Cabinet outlining the level of compliance, achieved results, key challenges and recommendations.

The minister affirmed that preparing such reports would support Kuwait's fulfillment of its international climate and environmental commitments and help preserve the country's resources for future generations.



Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs and Head of the Women's Affairs Committee Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah chairs the second meeting on projects.

Minister nods working groups, discusses women's platform

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): Minister of Social Affairs, Family and Childhood Affairs and Head of the Women's Affairs Committee Dr. Amthal Al-Huwailah chaired Wednesday the committee's second meeting to review implementation of decisions from its first meeting and discuss ongoing projects.

A ministry statement said the committee approved the formation of working groups and discussed the draft

women's platform ahead of completing procedures for its launch.

The meeting reviewed priorities related to international women's indicators, national data and statistics, and mechanisms to support decision-making and strengthen coordination among relevant authorities.

During the meeting, the committee recommended documenting and measuring national women's initiatives and

projects through the committee and the women's platform to highlight efforts to empower women and boost their participation across sectors.

Minister Al-Huwailah reaffirmed the committee's commitment to strengthening coordination among government agencies and using national and international data to support the development of policies and initiatives.



KUNA photos

Jahra field monitoring team focus on hurdles

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The field monitoring team in Jahra Governorate recently held a coordination meeting at the headquarters of the governorate to discuss its observations during its field visits, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

Jahra Governor Hamad Al-Habashi attended the meeting, which focused on the mechanisms for addressing the observations in coordination with the relevant government agencies.

Head of the field monitoring team Lieutenant Colonel Bandar Al-Khaldi presided over the meeting.

Present at the meeting were the team members, Governorate Council member Major General Ashraf Al-Amir, Eng. Faisal Al-Enezi from the Traffic Engineering Unit at the General Traffic Department in the Interior Ministry, Director of Jahra Governorate Fire Department Brigadier General Abdullah Al-Jazzaf, Head of Jahra Industrial Center Colonel Mohammad Al-Ali, Head of Al-Tahrir Center Colonel Abdullah Al-Owaidan, Liaison Officer at Jahra Governorate Fire Department Lieutenant Colonel Fahd Nayef Al-Enezi, representative of the Ministry of Public Works Eng. Mazid Al-Enezi, and Head of the Transactions Department at Kuwait Municipality Mansour Al-Tawala.

During the meeting, they looked into the challenges at a site in the governorate, and then deliberated on the solutions and coordination mechanisms between the relevant authorities.

Holding the meeting is one of the tasks of the field monitoring team in terms of following up observations during field visits and coordinating with the concerned public institutions to address these observations.



Al-Habashi



KUNA photo

Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi met a delegation from the US-based Mayo Clinic to discuss strengthening cooperation in medical education, professional development and healthcare.

MoH seeks to boost medical expertise, healthcare with US-based Mayo Clinic

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): Minister of Health Dr. Ahmad Al-Awadhi met a delegation from the US-based Mayo Clinic on Wednesday to discuss strengthening cooperation in medical education, professional development and healthcare.

A Health Ministry statement said Al-Awadhi reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to expanding cooperation with leading international healthcare institutions to develop national competencies, enhance continuous professional education and im-

prove healthcare quality.

The two sides reviewed enabling Health Ministry medical staff to participate in the Clinic's educational lecture series featuring international experts, promoting knowledge exchange with Kuwaiti physicians.

The statement said the initiative reflects efforts to turn international partnerships into practical programs supporting national capacity-building through specialized education and training opportunities.

The Mayo Clinic delegation praised the Health Ministry's efforts to develop Kuwait's healthcare system.

The meeting was attended by Health Ministry Undersecretary Sheikh Dr. Salman Khalifa Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for External Health Services Dr. Hisham Kalandar, Mayo Clinic International Executive Director for the Americas Jose Padilla, and Mayo Clinic Middle East Medical Director Dr. Omar Ghanem.

HORIZON TALK

Ahmed Al-Jarallah



The Emperor: ‘The competition is over ... Put the crown on the head of the woman who made men’

BUILDING nations begins with building citizens. If the foundation is solid, the nation becomes strong.

Building a person begins with the mother who raises her children in the right way. The late Egyptian poet Hafez Ibrahim was right when he said: “The mother is a school. If she is well prepared, you prepared a people of noble lineage.”

The mother builds generations and watches over her children from their earliest childhood. This is why the mother occupied a lofty position in history.

The first story in today’s “Horizon Talk” is a symbolic tale about the making of generations. The second, which is also symbolic, is drawn from the former Soviet Union. It shows us how a state collapses when corruption comes from the top and the hardworking citizen falls under the domination of a corrupt manager. Therefore, the collapse of the Soviet Union did not start in the 1990s, but rather when corruption became entrenched in even the smallest government departments and factories.

In the first story, a great emperor summoned the goldsmith of his land and asked him to create a crown of pure gold, telling him he was preparing it for an important competition.

One week later, the goldsmith returned with a crown of unmatched beauty.

Through the heralds of the city, the emperor announced that a competition will be held in a month, and that the winner should have rendered distinguished service to the nation.

Everyone hurried to participate -- sculptors, poets, engineers and doctors, all fully prepared.

On the day of the competition, the stage was erected, the emperor sat on his high throne and gave the order for the competition to begin.

A young man stepped forward and said, “Your Majesty, I am a doctor and I authored a book on medicine containing descriptions of previously unknown remedies, as well as various treatments

The Emperor ordered the chief goldsmith to craft a crown of gold.

The winner of the competition rendered distinguished service to the nation.

Everyone was mobilized to participate, and all were fully prepared.

On the appointed day, the Emperor gave permission for the race to begin.

The doctor: “My only reward is that you alleviate the suffering of your people.”

The poet recited a poem praising his love for his homeland.

The Emperor was astonished by the engineer’s valuable military observations.

He saw an elderly woman, stooping, watching the scene intently.

When Khrushchev visited some factories, a worker caught his attention.

He asked about his background, and when he saw him disciplined, he ordered to grant him a house.

They gave you the house and the car, but it seems you have not read the Pravda!

for headache, heartburn, stomach ulcer and other ailments. My only goal is to alleviate the suffering of your people.”

The Emperor was astonished by his knowledge and applauded him enthusiastically. The Emperor thought to himself, “A young physician with such skill and such love for his country is a promising prospect.” He then asked him to return to his place.

Another young man stepped forward and said, “Your Majesty, I am a poet and I composed a poem that I would be honored to have you hear it.” The poet recited a poem praising virtues, love of country, and the achievements of ancestors, concluding with a prayer for the Emperor.

The Emperor was impressed by his eloquence and thought to himself, “How can such a young man possess such eloquence? This also bodes well.” The young man then returned to his place.

A third man stepped forward and said, “Your Majesty, I am an engineer and I traveled throughout the empire, but I did not find any fortress that can protect the homeland from enemy attacks. This bridge must be demolished, because it will be a passage for the enemy if they attack us. Another bridge must be built. The fortress is not suitable at the foot of the mountain, otherwise, it will become a prison once the enemy surrounds us. The fortress must be built on the summit, so that we can shoot at our enemies and they cannot shoot at us. These are my military observations and I hope you will present them to the commanders.”

The Emperor was astonished by what he heard and uttered, “What do I hear and see? This is a land of good tidings.” The Emperor asked the engineer to return to his place and then called the fourth contestant.

An elderly woman, bent over on her cane, was watching the scene intently.

“It would be impolite to keep this lady waiting,” the Emperor thought to himself. He called

her and asked her to come forward. She stood before him. “What do you have?” he asked.

“Your Majesty,” she replied, “I am not a contestant, but the mother of these three young men -- the poet, the doctor and the engineer. I came to see who among them will win the prize.”

At that moment, the emperor rose and said, “Gentlemen, the competition is over and we have one winner. Put the crown on the head of the woman who made men.”

Khrushchev and the worker who did not read the Pravda

During his visit to some factories, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, who ruled the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1964, noticed a skilled, energetic and hardworking worker. He inquired about his background, and finding him disciplined, he ordered that he be given a car and a house.

The following May Day, Khrushchev made another visit. He passed by the same factory and found the same worker. Impressed by his continuous hard work, he again ordered that he be rewarded with a car and a house.

The worker said to him, “Comrade, I am the same person you rewarded with a car and a house last year, but I have not received them until now.”

Khrushchev asked the factory manager, “Why didn’t you carry out my order?”

The factory manager picked up the Pravda, the official newspaper of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and said, “We gave him the car and the house, and here is a picture of him standing in front of the house and the car.”

Khrushchev said to the worker, “My son, they gave you the house and the car, but it seems you do not read the Pravda!”

Youth speeding at 180 km/h caught on Jahra Expressway

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Jahra traffic patrols detained a young man in his twenties after he was caught driving at 180 kilometers per hour on the Jahra Expressway between Qairawan and Doha, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a traffic source, a mobile radar unit detected a vehicle traveling at 180 kilometers per hour on the Jahra Expressway between Qairawan and Doha. The driver was pursued and forced to stop. A traffic citation was issued, and the young man was taken to the traffic detention center pending his referral to court.

Kuwaiti held after hit, run on coast road; Asian hurt

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: A Kuwaiti citizen has been arrested following a hit-and-run accident on the coastal road in Mahboula that left an Asian man seriously injured, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to the report, the victim was rushed to Adan Hospital after sustaining serious injuries in the accident. Medical examinations revealed that he suffered internal bleeding, in addition to fractures to his arm and several ribs.

The driver was later arrested and referred to the concerned authorities for further investigation. A case was registered to establish the full details of the incident and determine the appropriate legal action.

Hunt on for bike rider: An investigation has been launched into a hit-and-run accident after an Arab woman complained that her vehicle was struck by a motorcyclist who fled the scene, reports Al-Anba daily.

The woman told authorities that the accident occurred opposite Jumana Bint Al-Hassan School. She provided details of the incident, prompting authorities to register a case.

Investigators are taking the necessary steps to identify and apprehend the motorcyclist and complete the legal procedures.

Indian injured in fall: An Indian expatriate was injured in a fall from a height inside a shopping mall in Al-Mutlaa City, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the security checkpoint at Al-Jahra Hospital reported the arrival of the Indian national, who was suffering serious injuries sustained in the fall. Authorities are investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Woman suicide attempt foiled

Bridge jumper doing well: KFF

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Kuwait Fire Force (KFF) announced that teams from the Al-Joun Marine and Sheikh Jaber Bridge Fire and Marine Rescue Centers responded to a suicide attempt by a woman who jumped from the top of the Sheikh Jaber Causeway, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

KFF stated that the teams successfully rescued the woman and handed her over to emergency medical services, confirming that she was in good condition.

Police probe citizen's death: Security authorities have launched an investigation into the death of a citizen after medical teams suspected foul play, reports Al-Anba daily.

The Ministry of Interior’s operations room received a report regarding the death of a man in his forties.

The caller, identified as the deceased’s brother, informed authorities of the incident.

Emergency medical personnel who arrived at the scene observed suspicious circumstances surrounding the death. The Public Prosecution was notified and ordered the case to be registered.

The General Department of Criminal Evidence and Forensic Medicine was assigned to examine the body, while the General Department of

Criminal Investigation was tasked with investigating the circumstances surrounding the death.

The investigation is ongoing.

Repeat offender nabbed: Farwaniya Governorate patrols referred a repeat offender to the Drug Control General Department after he was arrested in Ardiya in possession of a bag containing methamphetamine, reports Al-Anba daily.

According to a security source, the man appeared nervous while passing through a security checkpoint.

When asked to present his civil ID, he attempted to throw a bag out of the vehicle window, but it fell inside the car. During questioning, he admitted that the bag contained methamphetamine.

Jobless man selling drugs: Security patrols in Jahra Governorate arrested a man in his thirties in Al-Qasr for possessing narcotics and drug paraphernalia, reports Al-Anba daily.

Jahra security patrols noticed a vehicle being driven recklessly at high speed. After pursuing the vehicle and forcing the driver to stop, officers found that he was under the influence of drugs. Further investigation revealed that he was unemployed.

A search of him led to the discovery of narcotics and drug paraphernalia. He was taken into custody and, along with the seized items, referred to the Drug Control General Department.

MPW receives 1,556 emergency calls through hotline during July

By Mohammad Ghanem

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Ministry of Public Works announced that its emergency hotline number 150 received 1,556 reports

during July from various governorates.

These reports were distributed as follows: 422 in Farwaniya Governorate, 354 in Jahra, 279 in the Capital Governorate, 210 in Ahmadi, 206 in Hawalli, and 85 in Mubarak Al-Kabeer.

18 men caught at traffic checkpoint

By Munif Naif

Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The General Traffic Department at the Interior Ministry conducted a series of security and traffic campaigns in different governorates as part of its ongoing efforts to maintain national security and apprehend those proven to have committed violations and those wanted by law.

The campaigns conducted in the last 24 hours led to the arrest of 18 people, including those with outstanding arrest warrants and others who violated the Residency and Labor laws.

Those arrested were referred to the authorities for completion of legal procedures. A security source stated that these campaigns are ongoing throughout the country in line with the security plan aimed at strictly enforcing the law to guarantee the safety of everyone and maintain national security.

LARGEST SPREAD IN TOWN

Child Buffet	Adult Buffet
KD 3.450	KD 5.950
EVERY THURSDAY DINNER ONLY 6 PM TO 11 PM	EVERY FRIDAY LUNCH & DINNER 12:30 PM TO 4:30 PM & 6 PM TO 11 PM
AVAILABLE AT HAWALLY BRANCH BEIRUT ST, LULU AL WATAN COMPLEX, OPPOSITE CBK 22626782 ☎ 22626783	AVAILABLE AT FAHAHEEL BRANCH 1ST FLOOR, AL HOOR BUILDING BLOCK NO.11, BEHIND TO CENTERPOINT 23911175 ☎ 23911174

Egyptian exploiting medical profession

Gynecologist offering abortion pills arrested

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Officers from the Criminal Investigation General Department in the Criminal Security Sector at the Ministry of Interior arrested an Egyptian gynecologist who exploited his profession to perform illegal abortion and offer abortion pills at his private clinic, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press statement on Wednesday, the ministry revealed that the arrest of the suspect is in line with the ongoing security efforts to apprehend lawbreakers.

According to the ministry, the department received information that the suspect was offering abortion services at his private clinic and receiving payment in cash or through bank transfer. Acting on this tip-off, the department conducted investigations that confirmed the information. It

then set up an entrapment, during which an agreement was made with the suspect to provide abortion pills and a meeting was arranged at his clinic.

After obtaining the arrest and search warrants, the officers proceeded to the location and arrested the doctor. A thorough search of his residence led to the discovery of 49 abortion pills and 115 psychotropic pills.

During interrogation, the doctor admitted the crime, indicating that he illegally obtained the abortion pills from outside Kuwait.

The accused and the confiscated items were referred to the relevant authorities for legal action.

Embezzlers trial delayed: The Criminal Court postponed until Sept 15 the trial of 50

employees at Kuwait Fire Force (KFF), who are accused of embezzling public funds estimated at KD86,000, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The Public Prosecution had earlier charged the defendants with receiving undue salaries and allowances by falsifying attendance fingerprint records.

Case files indicate that the relevant authorities took administrative measures against the defendants and deducted the illegally obtained amount from their salaries. Nevertheless, these measures did not prevent their referral to the Criminal Court in order to be held accountable for the crime they allegedly committed.

This case is linked to the trial of Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled at the Ministers Court, as he is accused of not reporting the crime.

Kuwait’s education sector sees decline in FDI inflows

Gov’t education reform plans completion rate hits 76pc

By Najeh Bilal
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Official financial data issued by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) for 2025 revealed a decline in the share of foreign direct investment (FDI) allocated to the education sector in Kuwait, accounting for only 3.75 percent of total FDI inflows.

According to the documented figures, the total value of these investments did not exceed KD 73,958,393, reflecting limited foreign capital investment in the local education sector.

In this regard, informed sources stated that governmental efforts have made significant progress in implementing the

“Integrated Education Reform System Project,” with the actual completion rate reaching 76 percent to date.

They indicated that the final timeline for the project’s full completion and launch across all phases is set for 2030.

On the financial front, official data obtained by the daily revealed that the total allocated budget for the project stands at KD 182,361,561.

Range

This substantial budget is distributed across a range of important initiatives, including the development of educational staff, digitization of curricula, and modernization of educational assessment and evaluation methods. These efforts aim to improve Kuwait’s ranking in international education indicators and achieve sustainable development.

According to an informed source, linking education with the labor market

represents an economic safety valve, helping to keep pace with the evolving dynamics of the Kuwaiti labor market.

The “Integrated Education Reform System Project” was formulated as a strategic and comprehensive initiative aimed at redefining the role of Kuwaiti graduates, enabling them to become productive and in-demand contributors immediately after graduation in technology, commerce, and advanced technical sectors.

The government’s moves to privatize education are driven by a serious political and economic effort to reduce financial waste and lower government spending that places pressure on the public budget.

The source indicated that the goal is to open the door for major private sector institutions and local and international investors to move beyond being service providers and become strategic partners in leading the educational system.



KUNA photo
Kuwait’s Ambassador to Indonesia Khaled Al-Yaseen exchange mementos with the Indonesian Culture Minister Fadli Zon.

Kuwait, Indonesia discuss ways to expand cultural cooperation

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 5, (KUNA): Kuwait’s Ambassador to Indonesia Khaled Al-Yaseen met with Indonesian Culture Minister Fadli Zon on Wednesday to discuss expanding cultural cooperation through the preparation of a bilateral memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the two countries.

This meeting took place at the Ministry of Culture in Jakarta, where Ambassador Al-Yaseen and Minister Zon discussed efforts to strengthen cultural cooperation between Kuwaiti and Indonesian institutions.

Al-Yaseen praised the deep cultural and civilizational exchange between Kuwait and Indonesia, and highlighted Kuwait’s prominent role in research, printing, and publishing, and its active contributions to the region’s cultural

development.

For his part, Zon said that the meeting explored ways to enhance cultural relations through a MoU between the two countries, cooperation within the framework of the UNESCO Convention, and the development of cultural diplomacy programs between Indonesia and Kuwait.

Zon expressed his country’s interest in developing cooperation between cultural institutions in both countries, particularly in the fields of antiquities, museums, traditional crafts, and folk arts.

The proposed cooperation aims to expand cultural exchange and promote awareness of the cultural and artistic heritage of both countries, in addition to strengthening coordination between institutions concerned with culture and heritage.

Bid to enhance accuracy in healthcare

CARIRS, MoH eye data integration for ‘Bedouns’

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Central Agency for the Remedy of Illegal Residents’ Situations (CARIRS) held a coordination meeting with the Ministry of Health, and discussed mechanisms for organizing and updating data on illegal residents (Bedoun) within the Ministry of Health’s systems, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

It was aimed to enhance data accuracy

and integration among government entities, contribute to the development of electronic procedures, and improve the efficiency of healthcare services.

They also reviewed ways to strengthen electronic connectivity and data exchange to support digital transformation efforts and accelerate transaction processing.

The meeting was chaired by the acting Secretary General of CARIRS Brigadier

General Dr. Sharif Al-Kandari and attended by assistant secretaries and several officials.

The Ministry of Health delegation was headed by Assistant Undersecretary for Digital Health Affairs Engineer Adel Al-Rashidi and included Director of the Information Systems Department Engineer Khaled Al-Azmi, along with several ministry specialists.



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Farwaniya Governorate photos
Top and above: Farwaniya Governor and acting Capital Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah meets with Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Louthan Environmental Group Dr. Mishari Saad Al-Mutairi at the Farwaniya Governorate.

Sustainability target in enforcing environmental, public initiatives

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Farwaniya Governor and acting Capital Governor Sheikh Athbi Nasser Al-Athbi Al-Sabah had a meeting with Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Louthan Environmental Group Dr. Mishari Saad Al-Mutairi at the Farwaniya Governorate headquarters on Wednesday.

Also present at the meeting were Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the group Eng. Meshaal Al-Shwaiter and Business Development Manager Eng. Muath Arsan.

During the meeting, the two parties discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in implementing environmental and community initiatives, as well as to support programs that establish sustainability principles and improve the quality of

life.

The Governor emphasized the importance of partnership and cooperation with civil society organizations and the private sector in the implementation of impactful projects. He affirmed the commitment of the governorate to support all initiatives that serve the community and promote environmental awareness.

On the other hand, Al-Mutairi and his companions expressed their gratitude to the Governor for the warm reception, appreciating his commitment to support environmental and community initiatives. They also confirmed their willingness to continue cooperating with the governorate to achieve shared goals in the interest of the public.

Al-Omran to peruse budget affairs

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Minister of Finance Dr. Yaqoub Al-Rifai issued a ministerial decree appointing Ahmed Abdulaziz Al-Omran as Director General of General Budget and Public Accounting Affairs at the Ministry of Finance, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

The appointment reflects the ministry’s approach of empowering qualified national employees to assume leadership positions, contributing to the development of the financial and administrative work system, improving service quality, and enhancing institutional performance efficiency.



Ahmed Al-Omran

Scientists uncover microbial arsenal beneath Kuwait’s shores

KISR turns mangrove microbes into oil cleanup solution

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) has announced the completion of a research project focused on using mangrove microbes to treat oil-contaminated soil, with the aim of enhancing the protection of coastal ecosystems and developing innovative scientific solutions, reports Al-Seyassah daily.

In a press release, KISR explained that the project addresses environmental challenges facing mangrove forests and coastal areas in Kuwait due to human activities and pollution from oil and heavy metals. These ecosystems are among the

most productive and diverse, playing a vital role in maintaining ecological balance.

In this regard, Dr. Abrar Akbar, a researcher in KISR’s Food Security Program, said the project focused on studying microbial diversity in mangrove sediments along the Kuwaiti coast using advanced high-throughput DNA sequencing technology. Local bacterial strains capable of breaking down crude oil and using it as a food source were isolated, and their efficiency in bioremediation was evaluated through experimental systems simulating contaminated coastal

soil.

She stressed that the project’s results represent the first comprehensive scientific database documenting the microbial diversity and functional capabilities of microbial communities in Kuwait’s mangrove sediments.

Dr. Akbar explained that the study revealed the presence of bacterial species with important environmental roles, including the breakdown of petroleum compounds, participation in the sulfur cycle, decomposition of organic matter, and biofilm formation.

Genetic analyses showed the presence

of specialized metabolic pathways responsible for breaking down petroleum hydrocarbons. Seasonal changes in the composition of microbial communities were also observed, with higher levels of diversity and balance recorded during the warmer months.

The study indicated that bioremediation trials produced promising results, with bio-enrichment and biostimulation strategies contributing to a reduction of up to 76 percent in total petroleum hydrocarbon concentrations, along with a significant decrease in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) levels.

Dr. Akbar emphasized that the project’s findings will provide reference data to support mangrove habitat restoration programs in Kuwait, enhance coastal pollution monitoring efforts, and contribute to the development of national strategies based on nature-based solutions for ecosystem management.

She expressed her appreciation for the support provided by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) in completing the project.

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait’s KD 3.1 bln

He explained that these positive effects are reflected in the performance of Kuwait’s stock market through five strategic axes.

The first involves strengthening investor and institutional confidence, as increased capital spending sends strong and reassuring signals to local and global financial markets.

The second axis focuses on injecting liquidity, stimulating trading activity, and attracting new government contracts and projects, which revitalizes the flow of money within the economy. This is directly reflected in a significant increase in daily cash trading volumes, boosting market activity and supporting stock values.

The third axis relates to enhancing capital flows, which contributes to maximizing the profitability of listed companies.

The fourth axis focuses on stimulating credit activity and revitalizing the banking sector. The banking sector represents the largest component and carries the highest relative weight in Boursa Kuwait indices. Its impact is reflected through the growing demand for financing from companies implementing government projects, which supports the stability of the overall stock market index.

The fifth axis focuses on attracting foreign capital and in-

vestment through the financial stability generated by government spending. This enhances the attractiveness of the Kuwaiti market to global funds as a safe investment destination.

This advantage strengthens Boursa Kuwait’s position as a stable investment destination amid a turbulent regional environment.

Last lease

holders to comply with the new regulations. The decision affects 583 real estate brokers.

Former Minister of Commerce and Industry Khalifa Al-Ajil had previously suspended the issuance of new home-based licenses for brokerage activities while allowing existing licenses to remain valid. However, the current Minister of Commerce and Industry Osama Boodai issued a decision to permanently discontinue home-based licenses as part of the ministry’s plan to regulate the real estate brokerage market and enhance professionalism and oversight within the sector.

Kuwait, Thailand

the first political consultation between the two countries, he is now working with the concerned Kuwaiti authorities to plan the second meeting in Kuwait, in addition to discussions between the foreign

ministries of the two countries.

He expressed his desire to explore more opportunities for cooperation between various government entities and to create a suitable environment for advancing negotiations on bilateral agreements.

He stated that Thailand and Kuwait already have a strong trade base, with the volume of trade between the two countries reaching \$947 million in 2025. He revealed that the exports of Thailand to Kuwait include automobiles, auto parts, wood products, and precious stones and jewelry, while the imports of his country from Kuwait include refined petroleum products, crude oil and chemical products.

He asserted that the real opportunity lies in transitioning from the traditional buyer-seller relationship to a value-added partnership that achieves sustainable growth for both countries.

He said Thailand aspires to become a long-term strategic partner for Kuwait, particularly in areas that support the priorities of Kuwait Vision 2035 like food security, healthcare and tourism.

He disclosed that Thailand offers a wide range of investment opportunities complementing the long-term development priorities of Kuwait, such as food processing, agribusiness, healthcare, tourism and hospitality.

He confirmed that Thailand has a sophisticated investment ecosystem, supported by attractive

incentives offered by the Board of Investment (BOI) in Thailand, along with modern infrastructure and a strategic location in the heart of Southeast Asia, providing investors with access to the broader ASEAN market.

He stated that the volume of bilateral investments remains limited, but has the potential for growth. He said the Embassy of Thailand is working hard to enhance mutual investment flows between Thailand and Kuwait, including plans to engage with the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) in order to facilitate and encourage Thai investments in Kuwait.

He added that the embassy is also in discussions to strengthen communication between Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) and BOI, with the aim of jointly exploring new opportunities for Kuwaiti investment in Thailand.

He also affirmed that Kuwaiti citizens can enter Thailand visa-free for tourism or short-term business visits. He revealed that last year, Thailand welcomed around 87,000 visitors from Kuwait -- about 5.8 percent of the total population of Kuwait, indicating that this number gradually increased from around 44,000 visitors in 2022.

He explained that for Kuwaiti residents, as well as for other types of visas for Kuwaitis, Thailand officially launched its e-Visa system in January 2025 through the website: thaievisa.go.th.

He indicated that medical services and medical tourism are among the greatest strengths of Thailand. He said his country has 61 hospitals accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI), and that Thailand caters to a large number of international patients from the Gulf region annually, including many from Kuwait. He stated that the health tourism sector in his country welcomed more than 580,000 international visitors in 2025.

He went on to disclose that there are five direct flights per week between Kuwait and Thailand, adding that the embassy is currently coordinating with the relevant authorities and airlines in Kuwait to increase the number of direct flights to other popular tourist destinations in Thailand, such as Phuket and Chiang Mai.

He asserted that his country considers the Kuwait Vision 2035 an important roadmap not only for Kuwait, but for the prosperity of both countries as well.

He also confirmed that his country is closely monitoring the regional developments, particularly those related to the Strait of Hormuz and its impact on global stability. He expressed his gratitude to the Kuwaiti government and people for ensuring the safety of the Thai community here, stressing that Thailand consistently calls for respect for international law to protect civilian lives and maintain supply chains. He added that his country welcomes the agreement

reached between the United States of America and Iran, and appreciates the efforts of all parties involved in pursuing dialogue.

He emphasized that Thailand is a true friend, urging Kuwaitis who might be considering visiting Thailand for leisure, medical treatment, education or business, to discover the best that Thailand has to offer --from world-class hospitality to world-class healthcare. He said his country boasts of a rich cultural heritage, stunning natural landscapes, and diverse investment opportunities suitable for everyone.

He confirmed that the embassy provides consular services related to passport issuance, emergency travel documents and official documents. He then highlighted the efforts of the embassy in protecting the rights of the Thai community here. He revealed that there are about 1,080 Thai citizens in Kuwait, including women married to Kuwaitis and others who are residing in the country.

Kuwait heat

directions on Sunday afternoon, bringing renewed relative humidity and hot, humid weather, especially in coastal areas.

Temperatures on Sunday are expected to range between 44 and 46 degrees Celsius, with southeasterly winds ranging from light to moderate at speeds of 8 to 32 kilometers per hour.



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Virginia Dems pick establishment nominees for 2 House seats

Missouri US Rep Bell wins Democratic primary rematch against Cori Bush

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo., Aug 5, (AP): US Rep Wesley Bell won Tuesday’s rematch in the Missouri Democratic primary against former Rep Cori Bush, an outspoken activist who had been part of a progressive group of House members known as the Squad.

Although democratic socialists like Bush have made gains in other places around the country this year, she fell short while running to reclaim the St. Louis-based seat that she lost two years ago.

As was the case in the last campaign, Bell was backed by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which lobbies for US support of Israel. Bush has denounced Israel’s military action in Gaza.

But Bell said the race came down to his work in the district, not international affairs, and he pitched voters on a more pragmatic approach to Congress.

The rematch was one of several consequential primaries in the state. In western Missouri, Republicans picked state Sen. Rick Brattin to try to unseat Democratic Rep. Emanuel Cleaver in a dramatically reshaped district that is part of President Don-

ald Trump’s attempt to retain a slim House majority in the midterms. Republicans already hold six of Missouri’s eight congressional seats and are hoping to pick up one more.

In northern Missouri, Republicans chose conservative talk radio host Chris Stigall as a potential successor to retiring Rep. Sam Graves, chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Meanwhile, Missouri voters defeated a pair of unique ballot measures backed by the Republican-led Legislature. One would have required all citizen-initiated constitutional amendments to pass in each of Missouri’s eight congressional districts instead of by a simple statewide majority - a high standard used by no other state. The other would have directed lawmakers to repeal the state’s individual income tax while authorizing a state sales tax expansion.

Bell’s primary victory is likely to propel him to reelection in November in the heavily Democratic St. Louis district.

“We had Cori Bush before, and a lot of things went wrong,” said Sandra Milbrandt, 58, who voted for



US Rep Wesley Bell reacts during a primary election night watch party after winning the Democratic nomination on Aug 4, in St Louis. (AP)

Bell. “Wesley Bell has been doing good. So why would we not keep him there?”

The deep-pocketed American Israel Public Affairs Committee spent millions to help oust Bush in 2024 after she criticized Israel’s response in Gaza to the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel. Bell was again supported by

AIPAC this year.

Nationally, public opinions of Israel have since shifted, particularly among Democrats. A recent survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that about 58% of Democrats now say the US is “too supportive” of Israelis, up from 45% in an AP-

NORC poll from January 2024.

Bell said he focused his campaign on what he plans to do for St. Louis.

“When we think about all that noise that was going on, I have a tremendous group of folks, and we just got to work,” Bell said during his victory speech.

Bush offered no reconciliation in defeat, instead swiping at Bell.

“It pisses me off that for the next two years this community will be represented by someone that didn’t deem you valuable enough to show up to one candidate forum where there were audience comments,” she said.

Bush and Bell both honed their leadership skills in Ferguson amid the racial unrest that followed the fatal shooting of Michael Brown by a police officer in 2014. Bell won election to the Ferguson City Council the next year, then defeated a seven-term St. Louis County prosecutor in the 2018 Democratic primary.

Bush, a protest leader, defeated longtime Rep. William Lacy Clay in the 2020 Democratic primary. She served two terms before being defeated by Bell.

Missouri was the second Re-

publican state, after Texas, to respond to Trump’s call last year to redraw congressional districts to the GOP’s advantage ahead of the midterms.

Also:

RICHMOND, Va.: Virginia voters on Tuesday picked establishment Democrats - a prosecutor and a former congresswoman - as their nominees to take on Republican incumbents in two congressional districts the party hopes to flip in November as part of a broader fight for control of the US House.

Shannon Taylor, the elected top prosecutor in a suburban Richmond county, will take on longtime GOP incumbent **Rob Wittman** in the 1st Congressional District. The coastal 2nd Congressional District, a true swing district with a heavy military presence, will see a rematch between two veterans - former Democratic Rep. **Elaine Luria** and **Jen Kiggins**, who ousted her in 2022.

Taylor and Luria were backed by the House Democrats’ campaign arm and a wide array of Democratic leaders, including Gov. **Abigail Spanberger**.



A helicopter conducting night operations prepares to drop water on the Quilpituk Creek wildfire burning on the west side of Okanagan Lake near Fintry, British Columbia, late on Aug 3. (AP)

Wildfire destroys about 230 homes in western Canadian Indigenous community

VERNON, British Columbia, Aug 5, (AP): A fast-moving wildfire destroyed about 230 homes in an Indigenous community in western Canada, officials said Tuesday, making it one of the country’s most destructive fires in recent years.

Dan Wilson, chief of the Okanagan Indian Band, said the Bradley Creek wildfire devastated much of a reserve community near Vernon, about 440 kilometers (275 miles) northeast of Vancouver.

“It was hard to recognize my community from the air with all the structures and the forest gone,” Wilson said after surveying the area by helicopter.

The destruction ranks among Canada’s worst recent wildfires. A 2024 blaze in Jasper, Alberta, destroyed about 350 homes, while the 2023 McDougall Creek wildfire, also in British Columbia’s Okanagan region, destroyed about 200 homes.

Canada has endured increasingly destructive wildfire seasons in recent years, with smoke from the blazes repeatedly spreading across North America and triggering widespread air-quality alerts.

Wilson called the devastation “surreal” and said it was one of the darkest days in the band’s history. The fire erupted late Friday and was driven by wind gusts of up to 115 kilometers (71 miles) per hour.

“The fire spread so fast that some of our members only had five minutes to evacuate,” he said.

Wilson said aerial firefighting crews helped save critical infrastructure, including a daycare center and a newly built school, by repeatedly dropping water on the area.

Among those forced to flee were Louis and Shorty Fred, who said they escaped Saturday with flames close behind them.

“I’ve been living here all my life, and

I’ve really never seen anything like this,” Louis Fred said. “Even 2021 was bad. It was huge. But the wind wasn’t nothing like compared to this one.”

About 8,000 people have been evacuated across British Columbia, Emergency Management Minister Kelly Greene said. There were 37 evacuation orders Tuesday, with conditions changing hourly.

The BC Wildfire Service said about 120 wildfires were burning across the province, roughly 50 of them out of control. In addition to Bradley Creek, major fires were burning near the communities of Boston Bar, Clinton and Kimberley.

“My thoughts are with everyone whose life has been upended by the wildfires in British Columbia. The Bradley Creek wildfire alone has forced thousands of people to evacuate their homes in the past few days,” Prime Minister Mark Carney said in a post on social media.

Nat’l Guard deployment to Washington into 2029 to cost roughly \$1.4 billion

WASHINGTON, Aug 5, (AP): The extension of the National Guard deployment in Washington, DC until January 2029 will cost roughly \$1.4 billion, according to a Defense Department estimate provided to Congress.

The figure offers a glimpse of how much taxpayer money will be spent on a deployment that has been criticized by local officials as an infringement of their city’s autonomy and by Democrats who say it has militarized the streets of nation’s capital at the public’s expense.

The cost estimate is for fiscal years 2027-2029 and came in response to questions from Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren and was provided to The Associated Press.

The deployment began last summer, when President Donald Trump issued an emergency order that launched a law enforcement surge in the city which the administration says was meant to fight crime. Hundreds of armed Guard troops have been deployed to city streets, supporting arrest operations but also helping with snow removal and carrying out beautification projects. This summer, as the city marked the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, their numbers surged to



National Guard troops walk across the street from the Waldorf Astoria hotel where President Donald Trump will attend the White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner, in Washington on July 24. (AP)

about 5,000.

The Defense Department said in its estimate the cost assumes there will be an average of 2,500 National Guard members in Washington through January 2029.

“While American families are getting flattened by skyrocketing costs, Donald Trump is spending \$1.4 billion to keep troops on the streets in Washington for years on end,” War-

ren said in an emailed statement. “The National Guard are not pawns and taxpayer dollars are not a piggy bank for Trump’s political stunts.”

The cost was first reported by The Washington Post.

The Pentagon said last month the Guard mission will continue until Jan. 20, 2029, “or until terminated by the President.” The deployment was set to expire at the end of this year after previously being extended.

While the use of National Guard members has been restricted by courts elsewhere, their presence continues in large numbers in D.C. where the president is the direct commander of the D.C. Guard.

What’s not clear is whether the governors will extend their state units for more than two years. As of late July there were 4,600 military personnel from D.C. and 23 states and territories still in the city, some sent to help with security and other functions as part of events around July 4th.

One state, Georgia, had roughly 800 personnel here, more than the DC National Guard. Maj. R. Dustin Cole, spokesperson for the Georgia Air National Guard, said in an email the increased number is temporary. He stopped short of saying how many Georgia troops might be pulled away, and when.



In this photo provided by the Ukrainian Emergency Service, firefighters put out a fire in a residential building following a Russian air attack in Kramatorsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine on Aug 5. (AP)

Russian missile and drone barrage in Ukrainian capital region kills 17

KYIV, Ukraine, Aug 5, (AP): Russian missile and drone strikes on Kyiv and the surrounding region killed 17 people and wounded 44 others overnight into Wednesday, smashing business premises and a train station, Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

The targets hit included a brewing company, a warehouse for construction material, and a mail sorting office that had nothing to do with the war, Zelenskyy said. But the Russian Defense Ministry said the businesses masked ties to the military.

The nighttime attack lasting about two hours was the latest in a series of large-scale Russian ballistic missile strikes that have become near-routine this summer. The intensified barrages are exploiting Ukraine’s critical shortage of interceptor missiles for the U.S.-made Patriot systems, the sole air defense weapon in its arsenal able to shoot down ballistic missiles. Zelenskyy has pleaded with other countries to send more of the ammunition made scarcer by the Iran war.

Supplies of air defense missiles to Ukraine during the first half of this year tumbled to one-third of the 2025 level, Zelenskyy said.

“Ballistic interceptors are what could have saved the lives of those killed today,” Zelenskyy said on

social media. “It is very important for our partners to understand that delays in supplying them, or a reluctance to hand over anti-ballistic systems, lead directly to such horrific casualties and destruction.”

With US-led peace efforts apparently stalled, Ukraine has stepped up its deep strikes on key Russian targets such as oil refineries in an effort to compel Russian President Vladimir Putin to negotiate. Zelenskyy has accepted an unconditional ceasefire demanded by U.S. President Donald Trump but Putin has refused.

In its latest attack on logistics facilities of Wildberries, Russia’s biggest online retailer, Ukrainian drones hit a warehouse in the Tula region south of Moscow, the company and the region’s governor said Wednesday.

It was the 14th Wildberries warehouse to catch fire in less than three weeks, according to a Ukrainian tally. Ukraine says the company provides goods that can be used by the military. Kyiv is also keen to unsettle the Russian public with high-profile attacks.

The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces downed 475 Ukrainian drones overnight over 16 Russian regions, as well as illegally annexed Crimea and the waters of the Sea of

Azov and the Black Sea.

Russia fired 24 ballistic missiles, four other missiles identified as either hypersonic Zircons or supersonic Oniks, and 115 drones, many of them jet-powered and harder to stop due to their speed, in the attack, Ukrainian authorities said.

The Russian Defense Ministry said it struck transport, logistics and distribution centers involved in military activity. It listed four targets in Kyiv, claiming they ran war-related operations.

Serhii Beskrestnov, an adviser to Zelenskyy, said the war of attrition has entered a new phase. “The enemy is attacking everything indiscriminately - retail warehouses, food storage facilities, logistics hubs, enterprises, building materials warehouses,” he said on Facebook.

It was not immediately possible to reconcile the different Russian and Ukrainian accounts of the military value of what was hit.

Mykhailo Hukov, a 40-year-old Kyiv warehouse worker, said an air raid warning that included a ballistic missile threat sounded just after midnight, prompting an immediate evacuation order.

“So everyone started running,” he told The Associated Press. “I turned everyone around so they wouldn’t go back inside for their backpacks.”

Europe

French, British teams rescue migrants: French and British teams rescued 157 migrants who were trying to cross the English Channel after the engine of their boat caught fire, French maritime authorities said.

On Tuesday morning, while the boat was still in France’s search-and-rescue zone near British waters, its engine caught fire and it rapidly began to break apart, the maritime prefecture for the English Channel and the North Sea said in a statement. French authorities deployed two rescue ships, a Navy helicopter and medical personnel. Britain’s Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Border Force also responded.

The rescue operation brought 157 people to safety — 103 rescued by French vessels and 54 by British vessels. All were due to be disembarked at the port of Boulogne-sur-Mer, in northern France, for medical assessment and assistance.

The boat had initially departed Monday from Normandy shores and was being monitored by French rescue vessels. (AP)

□ □ □

Flights at German airport disrupted: A drone sighting and the discovery of a suspicious object at Germany’s Leipzig/Halle Airport led to flight disruption during the night, and one runway remained closed on Wednesday, authorities said.

Several flights, including one passenger plane, were diverted to other airports after the sighting of a flying object near the airport shortly before mid-



Britain’s Prime Minister Andy Burnham, centre, speaks with John Craig, Interim Chief Coastguard, and Duncan Capps, Border Security Commander (DG BSC), left, near a recovered small boat, which was used by migrants crossing the English Channel, during a visit to HM Coastguard Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, in Dover, Britain, on Aug 2. (AP)

night, police said, and an anti-explosives robot was deployed to check an object near the airport’s south runway. They didn’t elaborate.

Flights using the other runway resumed shortly before 2 a.m., but the south runway remained closed Wednesday morning.

German Interior Ministry spokesperson Leonard Kaminski said that a drone was found at the airport but declined to elaborate, citing the ongoing investigation. He wouldn’t comment on German media reports that it was spotted near a Ukrainian plane and that possible explosives and a detonator were found attached to it. (AP)



Families evacuated from areas surrounding the Fuego volcano rest at a temporary shelter in San Juan Alotenango, Guatemala on Aug. 4. (AP)

Fuego volcano spews more ash as Guatemala shelters 1,700

Guatemala remained on alert Tuesday after evacuating villages during an eruption of the Fuego volcano, one of Central America's most active. About 1,700 people remained in shelters with the evacuations to stay in place until conditions

improve, according to the country's disaster agency CONRED. Officials raised the alert level to red in Sacatepéquez, Escuintla and Chimaltenango, where about 29,000 people are affected by ashfall and schools remain closed. Authorities

warned the next 72 hours were critical on Tuesday, as mudflows up to 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) long continue descending from the volcano, with incoming rain expected to increase the risk of additional volcanic mudflows. (AP)

Search teams recover Purja's body and 3 others from Pakistan peak

ISLAMABAD, Aug. 5, (AP): Search teams backed by military helicopters recovered the bodies of renowned British-Nepali mountaineer Nirmal Purja and three other missing climbers on Wednesday, bringing the number of bodies recovered from Broad Peak to seven nearly a week after an avalanche swept away a 10-member international expedition, officials said Wednesday. The Alpine Club of Pakistan said the operation was one of the most technically demanding recovery missions ever carried out on the mountain. It said the bodies of Purja, Chinese climber Zhong Wang and Nepali climbers Nima Sherpa and Kilu Sherpa were brought to Broad Peak base Camp. Search teams brought down three other bodies on Aug. 1. The bodies will be transported to a military hospital in Skardu when weather conditions permit, local officials said. In Nepal's capital, Kathmandu, family members, friends and supporters of the climbers gathered Tuesday evening for a candlelight



Nepalese mountaineer Nirmal Purja, who became the fastest climber of the world's 14 highest peaks, arrives at the airport in Kathmandu, Nepal, on Oct. 30, 2019. (AP)

vigil. Buddhist monks chanted prayers as mourners observed a moment of silence before lighting candles in memory of those killed in the avalanche. The climbers, who came from Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, China, Britain and the United States, were swept away by an avalanche last Thursday in Pakistan's northern Gilgit-Baltistan region, in what the Alpine Club has described as one of the country's deadliest mountaineering disasters.

S.Korean students detained for allegedly breaking into US military base

Record heat wave impacts people, animals in Japan and Korean Peninsula

SEOUL, South Korea, Aug. 5, (AP): Fans fainting at a baseball park. Lions dying at a zoo. A woman taking shelter in a car found dead. A doctor advising people to eat dog meat to promote stamina. The scenes caused by a record heat wave in Northeast Asia illustrate how extreme temperatures have gripped South Korea, North Korea and Japan. In most of South Korea, a major heat wave advisory was in place Wednesday as temperatures in densely populated greater Seoul, home to 20 million people, and adjacent areas soared as high as 39 degrees Celsius (102.2 degrees Fahrenheit). North Korean authorities have issued a heat wave advisory in many areas and called for people to take safety steps to avoid heat-related health problems.

Japan's anti-disaster agency reported more than 18,000 people with heat stroke symptoms were transported to hospitals during the week of July 20 to 26. Since mid-May in South Korea, about 2,220 people have been diagnosed with heat-related illnesses and 19 have died, according to a report from Interior and Safety Ministry. About 17,140 livestock, such as chickens, ducks and pigs, and about 160,000 farmed fishes also have died. On Sunday, the southeastern city of Yangsan saw temperatures reaching 42.5 Celsius (108.5 Fahrenheit), the highest figure recorded since weather observation began in Korea in 1904. In a Cabinet meeting Tuesday, President Lee Jae Myung instructed officials to view the ongoing heat wave as "a national disaster" and make all-out efforts to protect lives. On Tuesday night, a spectator in his 20s collapsed while watching a baseball game between SSG Landers and LG Twins at a stadium in Incheon city, west of Seoul. Emergency personnel administered CPR and transported him to a hospital, halting the game for about 10 minutes. Another fan in his 20s fell unconscious and received treatment at the stadium after the game, according to the Korea Baseball Organization, which announced Wednesday that all 10 games scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday were canceled and would be rescheduled. Min Son Yong, deputy director of the internal medicine department at Pyongyang General Hospital, told North Korea's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper on Sunday that people should eat dog meat and fish porridge to supplement protein to beat the heat.



Visitors holding umbrellas to avoid sunshine leave the Gyeongbok Palace in Seoul, South Korea on Aug. 5. (AP)

Euphemistically known as "dangogi," or sweet meat, dog meat has long been considered a stamina food in North Korea and is traditionally eaten during the hottest time of the year. Min also recommended watermelons, cucumbers, tomatoes, mung beans and ginger to cool down, the newspaper reported. Dog meat also has been eaten in China, Vietnam and African countries, as well as in South Korea, which plans to formally ban slaughtering, breeding or selling dog meat for human consumption beginning next year. Japan's Environment Ministry issued a heat stroke alert for most of the western and southern Japan on Wednesday. While temperatures in the Tokyo region temporarily fell this week, intense heat continued to hit southern Japan. In the southwestern city of Kumamoto, relief and cleanup work continued

following a magnitude 7.1 earthquake on July 28 that killed 38 people, including a woman in her 70s who developed heat stroke while taking shelter in a car. More than 43,000 households were still without water on Wednesday. Three lions have died at a Tokyo zoo, with a number of their animal peers developing apparent heatstroke symptoms. Tama Zoological Park said, Mugi, a 3-year-old female lion, developed a loss of appetite on July 19 and was unable to stand the following day. Suspecting heat problem, zoo keepers provided ventilation and a water sprinkler to cool her down. The lion eventually died on July 28 despite treatment with subcutaneous fluid, liver tonics and vitamins, the zoo said. Two other female lions, Ichigo, 11, and Luena, 15, also died within a few days, the zoo said. Autopsies showed dehydration and multiple organ failure in all three animals and officials say they believe heat was the cause of the health problems.

Also: **SEOUL, South Korea:** A group of eight South Korean students were detained Tuesday for allegedly breaking into a **United States** air base while shouting anti-US slogans, South Korean authorities said. US military personnel detained the four male and four female students after they allegedly entered Osan Air Base near the capital Seoul. They were later transferred to the custody of South Korean authorities, police said. The students were being investigated under a law protecting military installations in South Korea, according to police, who said they all had invoked their right to remain silent during questioning. Police said the students shouted slogans at the site including, "Let's smash US 7th Air Force." A US military statement said the group attempted to unlawfully enter the base through the main gate and that "unauthorized attempts to access a US military installation are taken extremely seriously." The incident will be addressed in accordance with applicable US and South Korean laws and procedures, the military said. The Korean Progressive University Student Union said in a statement on Facebook that those detained were members who were trying to protest what it called the US military's opposition to a South Korean semiconductor cluster project.

Colombia's outgoing president Gustavo Petro doubles down on fraud claims

BOGOTA, Colombia, Aug. 5, (AP): Colombia's outgoing President Gustavo Petro on Monday reiterated claims of fraud in the nation's June election, which his party lost narrowly to conservative leader Abelardo de la Esparilla. In an hourlong presentation to journalists, Petro claimed that results from thousands of tally sheets were manipulated by programmers after vote counts were transmitted to the headquarters of Colombia's national registrar, the agency in charge of organizing the elections. The accusations of fraud have been dismissed by international observers as well as electoral authorities in Colombia, which declared in late June that conservative lawyer Abelardo de la Esparilla won the election, defeating Petro ally Ivan Cepeda by 250,000 votes. De la Esparilla will begin a four-year term on Friday after he is sworn into office in a joint session of Congress. Petro, a longtime critic of Colombia's political establishment, has refused to acknowledge the results of the June presidential election. On Monday, the outgoing president accused electoral authorities of running an "obscure" election manipulated by foreign powers, and said that officials did not provide metadata for tally sheets that were scanned and posted on a public website, where citizens can check the results of every voting center in the country. "We are facing a profound institutional problem," Petro said. "And it's the inauguration of an illegitimate president." Under Colombian law, there is little Petro can do to stop de la Esparilla from being sworn into office this week because the conservative leader's victory has already been certified by electoral judges. However, analysts say that Petro's claims of electoral fraud could undermine de la Esparilla's legitimacy among some voters and further po-



Colombian President Gustavo Petro poses in front of his portrait in the gallery of former Colombian presidents during his final week in office at the presidential palace in Bogota, Colombia on Aug. 3. (AP)



This photo released by the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) shows what they say is the aftermath of an attack by FLA separatist and jihadist militants in Gao, northern Mali on July 18. (AP)

What to know about conflict in Mali and world's most terrorized region

LAGOS, Nigeria, Aug. 5, (AP): Mali is facing its most serious security crisis in years as al-Qaida-linked militants and separatist rebels join forces to intensify attacks against its military. The partnership between the JNIM jihadi rebels and the Azawad Liberation Front (FLA) is the latest twist in a decades-long conflict in what is already the world's most terrorized region. It has resulted in some of the largest attacks Malian security forces and their partners have seen in years, analysts say. The rebels and separatists launched massive simultaneous attacks across the country in April for the first time in a decade. Earlier this month, they partnered to ambush a Malian military convoy, capturing or killing dozens of soldiers, and mounting pressure on the ruling junta. Fatalities from militant attacks increased by 35% to 3,435 in the first seven months of this year, compared with 2,546 in the same period in 2024, according to data from the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), an independent conflict monitor. "The JNIM and FLA see the benefit of working with each other because

they function as force multipliers for each other," said Henri Nsaibia, a senior analyst for West Africa at ACLED. Both groups, Nsaibia said, have the same goal of "finishing the common enemy," which they see as being the Malian armed forces and its partner, Russia's Africa Corps paramilitary group. The relationship between the groups is "a form of tactical coordination" focusing on military operations, FLA spokesperson Mohamed Elmaouloud Ramadane told The Associated Press. He said the groups had agreed that after securing independence of the northern region of Mali the communities would decide what version of sharia is applied. The latest dimension to the Mali conflict began in 2012 with the northern Tuareg rebellion, which opened the field for jihadis, setting the country and the wider Sahel - a vast strip of semi-arid desert stretching from North Africa to West Africa - on a violent path. Soldiers took over Mali's civilian government in 2020, citing the security crisis, setting off a series of coups across the Sahel, which is considered the deadliest region in the world with a record of up to half of all terror-related

deaths globally, according to the Institute for Economics and Peace. The period of military rule has fared worse than previous civilian governments, analysts say, with armed groups increasing their footprint across the country and the Sahel. Here is a guide to the groups fighting in Mali and their goals: JNIM is the most potent of the armed groups in the Sahel region and one of the deadliest local affiliates of al-Qaida globally, according to researchers. It was formed in 2017 after the merger of four separate al-Qaida-affiliated groups in Mali, creating one bigger entity. One of its stated goals was to drive out French forces which, at the time, were helping Malian forces to fight the jihadis. The group is led by Iyad Ag Ghaly, a veteran of the Tuareg rebel group and a former Malian diplomat. It operates across much of Mali in the north, south, west and central axis. Last year, it imposed a blockade on fuel imports into the country, disrupting fuel supplies to the capital Bamako to date. JNIM is also active in neighboring Niger and Burkina Faso, and has been expanding its presence to coastal West Africa.



Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva speaks during the Workers' Party convention, where he was confirmed as the party's presidential candidate for the next election, in Sao Paulo, Brazil on Aug. 2. (AP)

Brazil cuts diplomatic presence in Argentina

SAO PAULO, Aug. 5, (AP): Brazil's government on Tuesday announced it is reducing its diplomatic presence in Argentina after renewed attacks by Argentine President Javier Milei on his counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. It is the first time in recent history that such a move takes place between the two neighbors. A spokesperson for Brazil's foreign office told The Associated Press that Milei has called Lula "a thief" three times since Sunday. He used similar wording on July 25 at the party convention of Sen. Flavio Bolsonaro, son of the former president who will be Lula's rival in October's election. Milei also accused Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes of being "trash" during the convention. De Moraes denied a request by the Argentine president to visit former President Jair Bolsonaro, who is under house arrest serving a 27-year sentence for a coup attempt.

Kuwait oil price surges to \$78.21 pb

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5, (KUNA): The price of Kuwaiti oil went up by USD 4.97 to reach USD 78.21 per barrel (pb) in Tuesday’s trading compared with USD 73.24 per barrel in Monday’s trading, according to the price announced by the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC).

Globally, Brent crude went down by USD 4.41 to settle at USD 79.36 pb, while US West Texas Intermediate decreased by USD 4.57 reaching USD 75.77 pb.

Business

National Investments Company Delivers Strong Performance, Reporting Net Profit of KD 12.3 Million and Earnings per Share of 15.4 Fils for Q2 2026

Other Comprehensive Income Reached Approximately KD 5 Million During the Second Quarter of 2026



شركة الاستثمارات الوطنية
National Investments Company



Khaled Waleed AlFalah

- National Investments Company continues to maintain a strong financial position and a high-quality investment portfolio
- The Company remains committed to developing innovative investment solutions and products that meet the needs of diverse client segments and keep pace with rapidly evolving market trends

National Investments Company announced its financial results for the second quarter of 2026, ended 30 June 2026. The Company maintained a robust financial position, underpinned by a strong financial base that supports its ability to navigate economic developments and capitalize on investment opportunities aligned with its long-term strategy.

Despite continued volatility across regional and global financial markets and the resulting challenges facing the investment environment, the positive indicators that began to emerge during the second quarter reflected the soundness of the Company’s strategic approach.

During the second quarter of 2026, the Company recorded revenues of KD 17 million and other comprehensive income of approximately KD 5 million. Net profit for the three-month period ended 30 June 2026 amounted to KD 12.3 million, representing earnings per share of 15.4 fils. Total assets stood at KD 353.6 million, while total equity attributable to shareholders of the Parent Company amounted to KD 206.6 million. Assets under management reached KD 1.3 billion as at the end of the second quarter of 2026.

Commenting on the results, Khaled Waleed Al-Falah, Chairman of National Investments Company, stated that the Company’s performance during the second quarter of 2026 demonstrated its ability to adapt to a volatile investment environment characterized by heightened caution across financial markets. He noted that the Company achieved a gradual improvement in performance compared with the first quarter, supported by the easing of certain geopolitical pressures and improved activity across several markets.

Al Falah explained that the Company continued to adopt a balanced investment approach focused on maintaining asset quality, enhancing portfolio-management efficiency and implementing effective risk-management policies. These measures contributed to mitigating the impact of market volatility and preserving the strength of the Company’s financial position.

A Strategic Vision Supporting Sustainable Growth

In this context, Al Falah affirmed that the results recorded during the second quarter demonstrate the Company’s success in strengthening its operational resilience and enhancing the efficiency of its business operations, positively contributing to its performance compared with the beginning of the year.

He added that the Company continues to implement its strategic plans in line with a

vision focused on achieving balanced and sustainable growth. This is supported by maintaining a strong financial position, enhancing the quality of its investment assets and further developing its risk management, governance and internal control frameworks in accordance with international best practices. These efforts strengthen the Company’s ability to navigate changing market conditions and achieve long-term stability and growth.

Al Falah further noted that the Company continues to invest in developing its institutional capabilities and human capital, enhancing operational efficiency and accelerating its digital transformation. These efforts contribute to improving service quality and operational effectiveness, alongside the continued development of investment solutions and products that meet the needs of diverse client segments and keep pace with rapidly evolving market trends.

He highlighted that the Company’s strong capital base and sound liquidity position provide it with considerable capacity to capitalize on attractive investment opportunities as they arise, both in the local market and across regional markets. This supports asset growth and the generation of sustainable returns that enhance shareholder value.

Al Falah also emphasized that sustainability has become an integral part of the Company’s strategy. National Investments Company continues to embed the principles of governance, sustainability and social responsibility across its various activities, recognizing the importance of balancing economic performance with the Company’s broader social impact.

Concluding his remarks, Khaled Waleed Al Falah expressed his appreciation for the continued trust and support of the Board of Directors. He also commended the efforts of the executive management team and all employees of National Investments Company, whose expertise and commitment have strengthened the Company’s ability to navigate changing conditions and deliver results that reflect the strength of the institution.

He reaffirmed that the Company will continue to pursue a balanced strategy founded on financial discipline, prudent risk management and well-considered investments. This will further strengthen its ability to create sustainable value for shareholders and reinforce its position as a leading investment institution in Kuwait and the wider region.

Key Milestones in the Company’s Performance

Fahad Abdulrahman AlMukhaizim, Board Member and Chief Executive Officer of National Investments Company, stated that the Financial Advisory Department within the Investment Banking and Alternative Investments Sector continued to reinforce its position as a leading force in Kuwait’s equity capital markets through the execution of innovative, high-impact transactions. These achievements have further strengthened the Company’s reputation as a trusted and established investment banking partner.

During the first half of 2026, the Company executed transactions with an aggregate value exceeding USD 2.5 billion. Among the most notable was the highly successful private placement and listing of Trolley General Trading Company in March 2026. This landmark transaction represented Kuwait’s only initial public offering during the first half of 2026 and was completed within an exceptionally short timeframe between the conclusion of the subscription process and the listing date, underscoring the Company’s leadership in structuring and executing equity offerings within a selective market environment.

The offering was 15.2 times oversubscribed, with subscription orders exceeding KD 776.7 million, reflecting strong investor confidence in the issuer and the effectiveness of the transaction structure. Acting as Subscription Agent, Exclusive Listing Advisor, Joint Lead Coordinator and Joint Bookrunner, National Invest-

ments Company led every stage of the transaction, from structuring and coordination with regulatory authorities to bookbuilding, preliminary and final allocation, and the successful listing.

The Company also secured an exceptional extension to the listing approval to mitigate the adverse impact of regional tensions and support strong post-listing trading. The share price reached 910 fils by the end of the second quarter of 2026, representing an increase of 47.2% since listing. This performance reflects the successful execution of the offering and listing, the effective management of its various stages and the Company’s expertise in implementing innovative transaction models.

AlMukhaizim further highlighted the Company’s seamless management of all regulatory procedures in coordination with the Capital Markets Authority, Boursa Kuwait and Kuwait Clearing Company, culminating in the successful listing on Boursa Kuwait’s Premier Market.

The offering attracted thousands of subscribers, alongside notable participation from international institutional investors in the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This further reinforces Kuwait’s position as an attractive destination for high-quality equity offerings and cross-border capital flows.

In parallel, the Company continued to advance a strong pipeline of equity capital markets transactions. These included preliminary preparations for prospective initial public offerings in the education sector and for a retail company operating through its digital platform across GCC markets. The pipeline also included a private placement associated with the capital increase of one of the GCC’s largest transportation companies. Its subscription period was launched in June 2026 and remained open for two weeks.

In addition, the Company assessed the feasibility of listing a food and beverage company on Boursa Kuwait, evaluated the financing requirements of a company operating in the entertainment sector, and undertook the preliminary review and structuring of a potential initial public offering for a leading, professionally managed information technology services and systems integration group in the Middle East.

Commenting on the performance of the Institutional and Wealth Management Sector, AlMukhaizim noted that the sector continued to deliver strong results during the second quarter of 2026. Dozens of new investment portfolios across various categories were established, while the value of the Company’s assets under management increased by 6.45% at the end of the second quarter compared with the first quarter of the same year. This reflects the continued growth of the sector’s activities and its contribution to expanding the Company’s assets under management.

In collaboration with the relevant departments, the sector also continued to implement initiatives aimed at developing the Company’s digital platforms and enhancing the services provided to investors. Internal procedures were also further developed in line with best practices, contributing to greater efficiency in processing investor re-

quests and improving the overall quality of service.

Regarding the performance of the Asset Management Sector, AlMukhaizim commended the performance of the Company’s investment products during the second quarter of 2026, despite the challenges faced by GCC markets as a result of geopolitical developments and the accompanying exceptional circumstances, fluctuations in investor sentiment and shifts in liquidity across the region. Several of the Company’s investment funds and portfolios recorded positive results during the quarter despite the challenging and volatile investment environment. This reflects the ability of the Company’s investment strategies to adapt to the changing market conditions experienced during the period.

During the first half of 2026, the Financial Instruments Team also added four newly listed companies on Boursa Kuwait to its market-making portfolio, bringing the total number of companies covered to 20. This expansion reflects growing confidence in the Company’s services and its capabilities in supporting securities liquidity and enhancing trading efficiency.

AlMukhaizim also stated that the Real Estate Sector delivered positive performance during the first half of 2026, supported by higher occupancy rates across owned and managed properties. This contributed to strengthening operational stability and sustaining revenue generation.

The Company also participated as part of a consortium in an opportunity tendered by the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects and the Ministry of Finance, in line with its strategy to expand its real estate investments and contribute to the implementation of high-quality projects that support economic development in accordance with the highest standards.

Expanding the Horizons of Future Growth

Addressing the Company’s future growth, AlMukhaizim stated that the Strategy and Corporate Development Sector continued to implement the five-year transformation strategy during the first half of 2026, achieving notable progress across its various implementation phases.

The Company continued to enhance its products and services by advancing the electronic trading project, completing procedures related to the enhancement of its investment funds, issuing its 2025 Sustainability Report and commencing the development of its 2026 Sustainability Strategy. The Company’s internal initiatives also marked further progress in its transition toward becoming an AI-first organization through the adoption of artificial intelligence technologies that support innovation and enhance operational efficiency.

AlMukhaizim also highlighted the Technology and Digital Transformation Sector’s contribution to strengthening the Company’s digital infrastructure and business continuity capabilities. The sector launched several digital services and systems, most notably the digital subscription platform, contributing to greater operational efficiency and more effective risk management.

The Company also commenced the im-



Fahad Abdulrahman AlMukhaizim:

- National Investments Company continues to reinforce its position as a leading provider of investment services and an executor of innovative, high-impact transactions
- During the first half of 2026, the Company continued to execute several landmark transactions with an aggregate value exceeding USD 2.5 billion

plementation of the Odoo real estate management system, which will enhance governance, strengthen its readiness to adopt advanced digital solutions and support sustainable growth.

AlMukhaizim commended the efficiency of National Investments Company’s Human Capital Sector, noting that the Company’s Kuwaitization rate reached 70%, while female representation increased to 32%. The “SHIFT” program also continued to prepare Kuwaiti female graduates for careers in the investment sector, alongside the “Bidaya” and “Ascend” programs, which focus on developing talent at the early stages of their professional careers. The Sector continued to invest in strengthening employees’ capabilities through professional and training programs, including the “Outward Mindset” initiative. It also focused on enhancing operational readiness and business continuity, developing succession planning, and preparing future leaders, thereby supporting the sustainability of talent and reinforcing the Company’s corporate culture.

Concluding his remarks, AlMukhaizim affirmed that National Investments Company is entering its next phase with a vision focused on maximizing added value and strengthening its ability to capitalize on investment opportunities under varying market conditions.

He noted that the Company will continue to invest in developing its business activities and operational capabilities, further reinforcing its competitiveness and position as a leading financial institution. The Company remains committed to delivering innovative investment solutions that create sustainable value for shareholders and clients while supporting the continued development of the national economy.

Continued Recognition and Achievements

- National Investments Company continued to reinforce its leading position in Kuwait and across the region by receiving several prestigious awards spanning three key sectors that represent the core pillars of its business.
- The Marketing and Corporate Communications Sector received the “Investment Brand of the Year in Kuwait 2026” award, the Asset Management Sector received the “Best Asset Management Company in Kuwait 2026” award, and the Institutional and Wealth Management Sector received the “Best Investor Relations Company in Kuwait 2026” award.
- These accolades were presented as part of the 2026 Global Banking & Finance Review Awards. Global Banking & Finance Review is a leading media platform and print publication that provides independent analysis, news and insights across banking, finance, investment and financial technology, offering decision-makers in the financial sector a comprehensive and balanced perspective on industry developments.

Expanding Across Regional Markets

- As part of its continued regional expansion, National Investments Company opened its first regional office at the Dubai International Financial Centre. This milestone strengthened the Company’s regional presence and broadened the reach of its investment services, enabling it to meet the needs of a wider client base within and beyond the region.
- The Company is also pursuing further expansion across GCC markets in support of its objective to establish a regional distribution network and enhance access to investment opportunities.
- These efforts form part of the Company’s strategy to reinforce its presence across GCC markets, broaden the scope of its investment services and deliver integrated financial solutions that meet the evolving needs of its clients.

Advancing operations through innovative clean energy solutions

stc first in Kuwait to trial zero- and near-zero-diesel network sites

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Kuwait Telecommunications Company – stc, a world-class digital leader providing innovative services and platforms to customers, enabling the digital transformation in Kuwait, announced the launch of two pioneering clean energy trials aimed at reducing the use of diesel consumption and emissions at remote network sites. Through the introduction of Self-Backhaul Rural Base Station System and Solar Hybrid solutions, stc has become the first telecommunications operator in Kuwait to trial both zero-diesel and near-zero-diesel network sites, marking a significant milestone in its efforts to advance sustainable network operations and support Kuwait’s environment by reducing its carbon footprint.

As part of the initiative, stc deployed its first trial at selected remote network sites, enabling them to operate entirely on solar energy. The Self-Backhaul Rural Base Station System relies on solar panels and battery storage technology to power network operations without

the use of diesel generators, resulting in zero fuel consumption and zero direct emissions while maintaining reliable network performance. Through this solution, remote network sites can operate 100% on solar power proving to be truly sustainable and completely reliant on clean energy.

The second trial was a system that combines solar power, intelligent battery storage, and conventional backup systems to significantly reduce diesel generator usage. Through this approach, the diesel generator operating time was reduced from operating 24/7 to less than four hours per day, representing a reduction of more than 83% in fuel consumption and associated carbon emissions per site. The Solar Hybrid system demonstrates how alternative energy solutions can enhance operational efficiency while reducing environmental impact across network infrastructure.

The significance of these trials lies in their practical application within remote network environments. These sites



Dhari Al-Quraishi
■ Al-Quraishi: Sustainability is a key consideration in the way we evolve our network and invest in future technologies.

have traditionally depended on diesel generators operating continuously to ensure uninterrupted service, resulting in substantial fuel consumption and carbon emissions. Through the deployment of



stc network site

these solutions at active network sites, stc is evaluating real-world performance and demonstrating the potential of alternative energy solutions to support more sustainable network operations. The ini-

tiative reflects the Company’s ongoing commitment to innovation and the responsible adoption of technologies that contribute to a more sustainable future. Commenting on the initiative, engi-

neer Dhari Al-Quraishi, Chief Technology Officer at stc, said, “The outcomes of our trials represent an important step forward in our journey to build a more sustainable and clean energy-efficient network. As the first telecom operator in Kuwait to test both zero-diesel and near-zero-diesel site solutions, we are exploring innovative approaches that enable us to reduce our environmental footprint while maintaining the high levels of reliability and performance our customers expect from our network.”

Al-Quraishi added, “Sustainability is a key consideration in the way stc evolves its network and invests in future technologies. These trials are generating valuable operational insights that will help us better understand the practical application of alternative energy solutions across different network environments. The findings will support future planning and deployment decisions as we continue to enhance operational efficiency and advance our long-term sustainability objectives.”

BUSINESS

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait Group holds H1 2026 analyst conference call

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) hosted its H1 2026 analyst conference attended by Giel-Jan M. Van Der Tol, Group CEO; Shiamak Soonawalla, Group CFO; Dr. Abdulaziz Jawad, Chief Strategy Officer; and Osama Ezzeldin, Assistant General Manager of Strategy and Follow Up.

Van Der Tol said, “Despite continued regional uncertainty, ABK delivered a strong first half performance, demonstrating the resilience of our franchise, the quality of our earnings, and our ability to execute consistently against our strategic objectives.”

He added, “Our results reflect strong momentum across our lines of business. We delivered healthy earning growth, expanded our balance sheet, further improved asset quality and maintained a robust capital position, while strengthening our funding profile and maintaining a disciplined approach to risk management. Together, these achievements reinforce the resilience of our business model and provide a solid platform for future growth.”

Van Der Tol highlighted that net profit attributable to shareholders increased by 16.9% year-on-year to KD37.1 million, while earnings per share increased by 9% to 12 fils.

He commented, “This performance was driven by strong revenue growth and disciplined cost management. We also strengthened our balance sheet by expanding our loan and deposit franchise, while further strengthening our capital position, with a CET1 ratio of 12.60% and a non performing loan ratio of 1.25%. Together, these results reflect the strength of our core banking franchise and the quality of earnings.”

Total assets increased by 5% compared to December 2025 to reach KD 7.3 billion, supported by loan growth of 7.8%, while customer deposits increased by 6.5%, demonstrating the continued strength and confidence of customers.

ABK continued to strengthen the quality of its balance sheet while growing the business. Non-performing loan ratio improved to 1.25% from 1.35% as of June 2025, reflecting disciplined underwriting and prudent portfolio management. At the same time, ABK maintained a strong capital position, with a CET1 ratio of 12.60%, and a total capital adequacy ratio of 18.03% providing financial strength and flexibility to support future growth ambitions.

He continued, “We obtained Central Bank of Kuwait’s approval to expand our



Giel-Jan M. Van Der Tol, Group CEO



Shiamak Soonawalla, Group CFO



Dr. Abdulaziz Jawad, Chief Strategy Officer

continue to strengthen a high-performance culture across the Group, with Kuwaitis representing approximately 70% of leadership positions and women accounting for 41% of our workforce. These metrics reflect our commitment to developing local talent and fostering an inclusive workplace.”

He concluded, “As part of our strategy refresh, we are sharpening our strategic priorities to seize new opportunities across our businesses and our operating model, strengthen our competitive position and create sustainable long-term value for our shareholders. Looking ahead, we remain constructive on the outlook for the second half of 2026. While geopolitical developments continue to warrant caution, our strong capital position, diversified funding profile, improving asset quality, and disciplined execution provide a solid foundation for continued growth.”

Brand Strength

On his part, Soonawalla affirmed, “H1 2026 results demonstrate the continued strength of our financial performance, supported by strong revenue growth, disciplined balance sheet management and continued improvement in asset quality-signifying the strength and resilience of ABK’s franchise.”

He added, “We delivered strong growth across our key financial metrics while further strengthening the quality of our loan book, maintaining robust capital and liquidity positions, while further enhancing our financial flexibility as we navigate such turbulent times.”

mance.

From an efficiency perspective, Soonawalla said, “The cost-to-income ratio remained well disciplined at 43.1%. Although 90bps higher year-on-year, yet it has continued its declining trend where it stood at 43.8% at year-end 2025.”

He added, “The quality and resilience of our earnings continue to be supported by our diversified business model. Commercial Banking remained the largest contributor to operating income at 44%, followed by Retail Banking at 33%, and Treasury and Investments at 23%, providing a balanced and diversified earnings mix.”

Furthermore, capitalization remained robust, with the total capital adequacy ratio at 18.03% and CET1 at 12.60%, remaining comfortably above the regulatory minima and providing capacity to support future growth.

Asset quality continued to strengthen, with the non-performing loan ratio improving to 1.25% from 1.35% as of June 2025, reflecting disciplined underwriting, prudent portfolio management and proactive credit monitoring.

The provision coverage ratio remained strong at 340%, with loan loss provisions maintained in accordance with Central Bank of Kuwait guidelines and exceeding IFRS 9 requirements by KD 196 million, providing a robust buffer against potential credit headwinds.

Soonawalla stated, “Total assets increased by 5.0% to KD 7.3 billion, with net loans and advances growing by 7.8% to KD 4.9 billion and customer deposits increasing by 6.5% to KD 4.3 billion

return client relationships. These actions helped to enhance capital efficiency and returns.

He added, “At the same time, we continued to strengthen our retail franchise by focusing across the key salaried customer segments for both Kuwaiti nationals and expatriates reflecting our disciplined approach to acquiring high-quality customers while maintaining prudent lending standards. In parallel, we continued to advance our AI capabilities, strengthen customer engagement, improve operational efficiency and enhance our digital capabilities across the Group.”

He stated, “In parallel, our Consumer Banking team in the UAE is making progress on the CBUAE mandated initiative, Jaywan, which is an initiative to establish a domestic payment gateway in parallel with global Visa card and Master card. We have completed our internal operational readiness for issuance of Jaywan debit cards and supporting domestic payment transaction through the Jaywan payment network.”

Meanwhile, ABK Wealth Management further strengthened its investment platform through a strategic partnership with Barings, a leading global alternative asset manager with approximately USD 481 billion in under asset management, and launched its US Dollar Money Market Fund. These initiatives supported strong business momentum, with its client base growing by around 50% and discretionary assets under management growing by approximately 30% year-on-year.

Turning to ESG, Dr. Jawad added, “A

key milestone during the first half of 2026 was the publication of our 2025 Sustainability Report, aligned with leading reporting standards and including selected ESG rating metrics. Backed by a broad data collection framework, the report further reinforces our commitment to transparency, accountability and long-term value creation.”

Beyond reporting, ABK advanced key ESG priorities, including sustainable finance initiatives, climate-related efforts, and the integration of ESG principles into its business practices. ABK also maintained close alignment with regulatory developments, ensuring that its approach continues to support long-term sustainable growth and meet the expectations of its stakeholders.

He emphasized, “Our upcoming five-year strategy is focused on unlocking the next phase of ABK’s growth by accelerating profitable organic growth while selectively pursuing value-accretive inorganic opportunities. We are sharpening our focus on delivering sustainable shareholder value and achieving higher returns on equity through balanced growth across Kuwait, the UAE and Egypt, supported by disciplined capital allocation and targeted investments in strategic capabilities.”

He added, “These include strengthening our retail, corporate and wealth propositions, expanding transaction banking and preparing for the upcoming mortgage reform in Kuwait. Further we will continue to strengthen and expand our digital banking offerings, modernize our tech stack and data platforms to improve scalability, AI, advanced analytics, and operational excellence. Together with our targeted digital CAPEX program, these initiatives are designed to build scalable capabilities, improve execution and deliver sustainable long-term value for our shareholders.”

Concluding his statement, Dr. Jawad said, “Looking ahead to the remainder of 2026, our confidence is underpinned by the strength of what we have delivered so far, and our focus is on sustaining the trajectory through continued disciplined, agility, and rigorous execution against our strategic priorities. The evolving landscape across the Middle East only reinforces the value of the fundamentals we have built our performance on including prudent risk management, a sound capital position, and a diversified business model supporting consistent performance regardless of external conditions.”



Sami Sharif and Ali Morad Behbehani

Company achieves higher premiums

Kuwait Insurance posts KD 5.4 mln gross profit

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Kuwait Insurance Company announced the results of the first half of the current year, where the total gross profit achieved for the current period amounted to KD 5.4 million (USD 17.6 million). The company also strengthened its financial reserves to meet any future insurance obligations, reaffirming its long-standing conservative approach to reserving since its establishment. The total gross profit includes income from the sale of investments amounting to KD 1.6 million (USD 5.2 million), which was recorded in retained earnings. The net profit achieved for the current period amounted to KD 3.7 million (USD 12.1 million), with Earnings per Share amounting to 15.76 fils (USD 0.05). It should be noted that Earnings per Share for the 2025 and 2026 periods were adjusted following the increase of the company’s capital to KD 25 million.

The total gross written premium for the current period amounted to KD 31.5 million (USD 103 million).

Insurance revenue amounted to KD 28.3 million (USD 92 million).

Total investment income for the current period amounted to KD 6 million (USD 20 million).

The company’s Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Sami Sharif, stated that the company follows a prudent and balanced strategy in managing its operations, highlighting its success in generating retained earnings of KD 81 million (USD 264 million), which underscores the strength, stability, and resilience of its financial position.

Mr. Sharif added that in addition to profits and premiums, the company maintains an excellent credit rating from AM Best and Moody’s at A- and A3, respectively, with a stable outlook. We are proud to continue receiving these ratings, placing us among the leading local and regional companies in the

insurance services sector.

On another front, Mr. Sami Sharif added that the company has made significant progress in its digital transformation project. KIC is in the process of developing a fully integrated digital platform which will, in future, support all its internal and external operations.

As part of its commitment to social responsibility, Kuwait Insurance Company organized a blood donation campaign for its employees in conjunction with World Blood Donor Day, under the slogan “A Drop of Blood Makes a Difference.”

The campaign was held in collaboration with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank, with the aim of supporting the country’s strategic blood reserves and contributing to saving patients’ lives.

Kuwait Insurance Company is also focused on the continuous investment and development of its employees through providing training and educational programs to develop individuals in offering insurance services to institutions, individuals, and stakeholders, thereby serving the interests of society and the State of Kuwait.

We continue to look forward to much more work to be done in the coming period and take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to achieving our goals, from the Board of Directors, shareholders, and employees.

Mr. Sami Sharif also expressed his sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Insurance Regulatory Unit for its effective role in enhancing the insurance business environment and reinforcing the principles of transparency and market discipline. He commended its continuous efforts in supporting the insurance sector’s stability and improving its efficiency, contributing to the sustainable growth of the insurance industry.

S&P GCC composite index declined by 1.5% in July 2026

Markaz: Kuwait equities outperform GCC peers, supported by resilient bank earnings

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Kuwait Financial Centre “Markaz” stated in its Monthly Market Review that Kuwait markets broke their three-month losing streak, edging higher on strong corporate earnings, even as most GCC markets declined during the month. Kuwait’s All-Share Price Index advanced by 0.6%, driven by a 1.5% gain in the Premier Market Index. The banking stocks were the key driver of market performance, posting a 3.1% gain during the month, buoyed by resilient corporate earnings. National Bank of Kuwait and Kuwait Finance House gained 6.5% and 2.3%, respectively, supported by strong H1 2026 earnings. The net profits of NBK and KFH increased by 3.0% y/y and 6.1% y/y in H1 2026 despite regional geopolitical challenges and the subsequent economic pressure. Among Premier market stocks, Trolley General Trading Company advanced 7.5% during the month after delivering strong Q2 earnings, with revenue growth driven by higher store productivity, network expansion, and resilient consumer demand.

In a key economic policy move, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development launched a USD 100 million Emergency Response Fund to strengthen crisis preparedness and enhance resilience against future economic shocks. Blackstone, KKR, and Brookfield agreed to acquire a 49% stake in a joint venture with Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), marking Kuwait’s largest-ever foreign investment. The \$16 billion deal supports KPC’s capital expenditure plans and its goal of expanding crude production capacity to 4 million bpd by 2035. The Central Bank of Kuwait kept its key benchmark discount rate unchanged at 3.5% in July following the U.S Fed’s decision to hold rates steady amid persistent price pressures. Kuwait’s real GDP contracted by 4.6% y/y in Q1 2026, weighed down by the 12.5% y/y decline in oil GDP amid disruptions in oil production and exports due to the geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Kuwait’s final fiscal accounts for FY2025/26 showed the budget deficit widening sharply to KD 7.1 billion (around 15% of GDP), from KD 1.1 billion in the previous year. The deficit was the largest since the pandemic-hit FY2020/21 and exceeded the government’s budget estimate by approximately KD 800 million. Kuwait issued a \$6 billion three-tranche sovereign bond—its first since October 2025. The offering was oversub-



scribed more than three times, reflecting strong investor confidence despite heightened regional geopolitical tensions.

GCC equities were broadly negative in July, with the S&P GCC Composite Index declining 1.5%. Renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, including attacks on key infrastructure facilities of Kuwait and Bahrain, dented investor sentiment. A good start to corporate earnings season helped limit market losses. Saudi Arabia’s Tadawul Index fell 1.9%, dragged down by the negative performance of major blue-chip stocks. The share price of Al Rajhi Bank declined 5.1% after issuing a more cautious outlook on loan growth and margins despite a 14% y/y growth in Q2 2026 net profits. Dubai’s equity index retreated 2.7% as re-escalation in geopolitical tensions triggered broad-based selloffs in real estate stocks amid concerns over foreign demand. Abu Dhabi equities ended positive in July (+1.1%) due to resilient earnings that lifted banking stocks. Share prices of FAB and ADCB rose 12.4% and 3.6%, respectively, during the month.

GCC central banks kept policy rates unchanged in tandem with the U.S Fed’s decision to hold rates, maintaining monetary policy alignment under the US dollar peg. S&P Global Ratings projected weaker GCC corporate profitability in 2026, citing higher logistics costs and delayed investment due to the geopolitical uncertainty that is expected to weigh on capital expenditure and debt issuance. The U.S has imposed a 12.5% tariff rate on imports from GCC economies to prevent goods produced with forced labor from entering its markets. Fitch affirmed its A+ sovereign rating for Saudi Arabia with a stable outlook. In the UAE, domestic credit growth accelerated to 15.0% y/y in May, the fastest pace in over a decade, supported by 10.1% growth in corporate lending and 13.3% growth in personal credit.

Global and U.S equities were muted during the month as the AI-driven rally lost momentum,

triggering a broad sell-off in technology stocks. Mounting concerns over stretched technology valuations and the sustainability of AI-related capital spending prompted investors to aggressively reduce exposure to tech stocks. The MSCI World Index edged up 0.5% for the month while the S&P 500 ended flat. However, the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite plunged 3.2%, exhibiting a deeper decline. The U.S. Fed left policy rates unchanged in the 3.5%-3.75 % range at the July FOMC meeting, but struck a firmer hawkish tone, with three FOMC members favoring a rate hike in July. Fed Chair Kevin Warsh offered little forward guidance, reiterating that policy would remain strictly data-dependent and that rates could still move higher if inflation pressures persisted. Selling pressure in technology and semiconductor stocks was even more pronounced across emerging markets as China’s progress in domestic chipmaking heightened competitive concerns, while elevated valuations in markets like Korea and Taiwan accelerated profit-taking. The MSCI Emerging Markets Index fell 3.3%, with South Korea and Taiwan equity indices declining 22.2% and 6.5% respectively.

The 10-year U.S. Treasury yield rose 31 bps during the month to close at 4.75%, driven by a spike in oil prices following renewed U.S.-Iran tensions and continued uncertainty over the Federal Reserve’s interest rate trajectory. Brent crude oil prices surged 23.6% over the month to close at USD 90.1/bbl., as reports of fresh military exchanges between the U.S and Iran and continued threats over control of the Strait of Hormuz revived fears of supply disruption, pushing the geopolitical risk premium sharply higher. The disruptions to alternative shipping routes, including the Bab el-Mandeb Strait and the Red Sea, due to attacks by Iran-backed groups further supported oil prices.

As we move into August 2026, investors will closely monitor economic data releases to set expectations on the future interest rate path, as the Fed has disoriented itself from providing future guidance. The resurgence of geopolitical risks continues to drag regional equity and global commodity markets. Global market performance could hinge on market sentiments surrounding technology and semiconductor companies. GCC markets, meanwhile, are expected to take direction from oil price movements, regional developments, and corporate earnings announcements.

Kuwait Oil Company expands oil network with ‘L&T’ project

By Inaas Awadh
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The L&T Energy Hydrocarbon Onshore Division at Larsen & Toubro won a new contract from Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) in line with the ongoing efforts of Kuwait to develop its oil infrastructure.

Hydrocarbon Engineering Magazine reported that the division secured a major contract for engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) work in Jurassic light crude oil export facilities (JLOs), as well as the modernization of the existing crude oil export network of Kuwait.

The financial value of the contract was not disclosed, but the scope of work and its classification as a lump sum turnkey project indicate that it is a huge project requiring a high level of engineering and execution expertise.

L&T’s winning of the KOC contract is an indication of the attractiveness of the Kuwaiti market to international energy companies.

In the coming phase, Kuwait intends to implement projects related to developing oil fields, increasing gas production, modernizing export facilities and improving energy efficiency, in addition to sustainability and

emission reduction projects.

The above mentioned project will support the oil storage and export system by constructing six new crude oil storage tanks. Each tank will have an operational capacity of 618,000 barrels, while the total operational capacity of the six tanks will be 3,708,000 barrels. The project includes the development of supporting facilities associated with the storage system.

It includes the installation of new pipelines, modernization of the existing crude oil loading and export networks, and raising the efficiency of the crude oil transportation system from production areas to the export facilities.

It will accommodate production growth and develop the ability of Kuwait to manage its oil exports in a more flexible manner.

It is a key component of the strategy of KOC to develop unconventional oil resources and boost the production of high-quality light crude.

The Jurassic oil reservoirs are located in North Kuwait and are part of the efforts of the country to diversify its production base and benefit from available reserves by using advanced technologies.

ALSAYER Group honored by the Kuwait Society for Human Rights for upholding workers’ rights

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: AL-SAYER Group announced that it has been recognized by the Kuwait Society for Human Rights in appreciation of its commitment to promoting and protecting workers’ rights while fostering a safe, fair, and respectful workplace.

The award was presented during a recognition ceremony held on Monday, August 3, 2026, at the Kuwait Society for Human Rights headquarters, attended by senior government officials, including representatives from the Ministry of Public Works, the Public Authority for Manpower, and various organizations committed to advancing labor rights and workplace excellence.

The recognition follows an independent survey conducted by the Kuwait Society for Human Rights as part of its ongoing efforts to promote a culture of human rights and support workers across Kuwait. The survey assessed the extent to which companies adhere to decent work standards and respect the fundamental rights of their employees.

According to the Society’s findings, ALSAYER Group was recognized for providing a safe and equitable working environment, respecting the dignity of every employee, complying with labor laws and regulations, and imple-



Group photo of the attendees.

menting responsible workplace practices that contribute to employee well-being, job stability, and long-term organizational success.

Receiving this recognition reflects ALSAYER Group’s unwavering commitment to creating a workplace built on integrity, inclusion, respect, and responsibility. Our people remain at the heart of everything we do, and we continuously strive to maintain the highest standards in employee welfare, ethical business practices, and organizational excellence.

Senior Manager of Advertising and Promotion for Toyota, Mr. Bader Faisal Al-Sayer noted that, “at ALSAYER Group, we believe that sustainable success begins with empowering our people. By cultivating an environment where every employee feels valued, supported, and respected, we strengthen our ability to innovate, grow, and contribute positively to the communities we serve. We extend our sincere appreciation to the Kuwait Society for Human Rights for this distinguished recognition. It serves as both an honor and a motivation for us to continue advancing our workplace practices and reinforcing our commitment to human rights, responsible employment, and excellence across all areas of our business.”



Warba adds travel program for eligible Visa cardholders

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Warba Bank announced the launch of the “Warba Travel Program,” a loyalty initiative available to holders of eligible Visa credit and prepaid cards. Customers can earn travel points on eligible domestic and international transactions and redeem them through participating travel loyalty programs.

The initiative supports Warba Bank’s strategy to expand its retail banking offerings and provide digitally managed travel rewards through its mobile application.

Travel Points Earning Structure:

- Points are earned based on card type and whether the transaction is domestic or international, for every KWD 1 spent:
- Visa Prepaid and Visa Platinum Credit Cards: Earn 1 travel point for every KWD 1 spent domestically and 3 travel points for every KWD 1 spent internationally.
- Visa Signature Credit Cards: Earn 3 travel points for every KWD 1 spent domestically and 6 travel points for every KWD 1 spent internationally.
- Visa Infinite Credit Cards: Earn 3 travel points for every KWD 1 spent domestically and 8 travel points for every KWD 1 spent internationally.
- Visa Infinite Privilege Credit Cards: Earn 3 travel points for every KWD 1 spent domestically and 10 travel points for every KWD 1 spent internationally.
- Monthly Spending Bonus: Customers who spend over KWD 5,000 monthly earn an additional 1 travel point for every KWD 1 spent domestically or internationally, subject to the monthly cap applicable to each customer segment, with an overall maximum of 100,000 travel points.
- Welcome Points and Digital Management:** Eligible cardholders may receive one-time welcome points, subject to applicable activation

- and program requirements:
- Visa Signature: 5,000 welcome travel points.
- Visa Infinite: 10,000 welcome travel points.
- Visa Infinite Privilege: 15,000 welcome travel points.

Customers can manage their points, track balances, and transfer points to participating airline and hotel loyalty programs through the Warba Bank mobile application.



Mohannad Essa Burhama

Participating Partners:

The program features a network of regional and international partners, including:

- Payment Network: Visa
- Airline Loyalty Partners: Kuwait Airways (Oasis Club), Etihad Airways (Etihad Guest), Gulf Air (Falconflyer)
- Hotel Loyalty Partner: Accor (ALL – Accor Live Limitless)

Executive Commentary:

Mohannad Essa Burhama, Director of Products and Segments – Retail Banking Group at Warba Bank, stated:

“The Warba Travel Program supports our strategy to provide practical digital banking services aligned with customer spending patterns. It enables eligible cardholders to earn travel points and transfer them to participating airline and hotel loyalty programs for use toward flights, hotel stays, and related travel benefits through the Warba Bank mobile application.”

Bourahmah added that tailored card propositions for premium customer segments support the bank’s retail banking strategy and encourage greater use of its digital services.

About Warba Bank:

Warba Bank is a leading Islamic bank in Kuwait with a strong focus on Sharia-compliant digital banking. With one of the largest shareholder bases in the country, the bank delivers innovative financial products and services, reinforcing its position as a digital-focused financial institution.

Empowering youth on their journey to the future

Weyay Bank honors top high school graduates

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Weyay Bank, Kuwait’s first digital bank, hosted a special recognition ceremony honoring the country’s top high school graduates from schools across Kuwait. The event was attended by Dr. Khaled Al-Rshaid, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, Mr. Mohammed Al Othman, Chief Executive Officer of Consumer and Digital Banking Group at the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK), members of the bank’s senior management, and the families of the honored students.

The event reflects Weyay Bank’s ongoing commitment to supporting and empowering young Kuwaitis at key milestones in their lives, particularly as they transition from secondary education to university. Through innovative digital banking solutions tailored to the needs and lifestyles of the new generation, Weyay continues to help young people navigate their financial journeys with confidence.

The program combined celebration with education and empowerment. Guests were introduced to Weyay’s journey in supporting students, including its student allowance services, while also learning about the benefits of the SELECT Card, designed specifically for university students to help them manage their finances from the start of their academic careers.

The ceremony featured the presentation of

commemorative awards to outstanding students, as well as prize draws, professional graduation photos gifted by the bank for future academic and professional use, and interactive networking opportunities that brought together students and their families in a vibrant and celebratory atmosphere.

Commenting on the initiative, Dr. Khaled Al-Rshaid, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, said: “Recognizing outstanding students is a well-deserved tribute to the dedication, perseverance, and hard work they have demonstrated throughout their academic journey. It also highlights the value of collaboration between public institutions and the private sector in supporting and empowering Kuwaiti youth. We commend Weyay Bank for this initiative, which goes beyond celebrating achievement by helping students prepare for university life and equipping them for future success.”

Mohammed Al Othman, Chief Executive Officer of Consumer and Digital Banking Group at NBK, added: “Today, we are proud to celebrate an exceptional group of young Kuwaitis who have proven that ambition and determination are the foundations of success. At Weyay, we believe our role extends beyond providing digital banking services. We are committed to empowering young people and supporting them through some of life’s most

important milestones. This is why we continue to develop innovative banking solutions and experiences that meet their needs and foster financial independence from their early educational years through to entering the workforce.”

He continued: “Weyay remains committed to strengthening its position as Kuwait’s first and leading digital bank for youth by delivering a seamless banking experience designed specifically for the next generation. Our goal is to provide smart, secure, and accessible financial solutions that help young people achieve their ambitions and build a successful future.”

Reflecting on the initiative, the graduates described the recognition as a memorable and rewarding experience that made them and their families proud. They also highlighted the opportunity to learn more about the banking services and benefits available to support them during their university years, noting that initiatives like this inspire them to continue striving for excellence and achieving new milestones.

Through initiatives and programs designed specifically for young people, Weyay Bank continues to strengthen its role as a trusted partner for the next generation by providing innovative digital financial solutions and meaningful experiences that support the aspirations of Kuwaiti youth and empower them to build a more successful and independent future.



Photos from the event.



A frankincense harvester makes careful cuts on a tree in Dhofar, allowing the milky sap to emerge before it dries into the aromatic resin prized around the world.

Frankincense: Where every scar tells a story

Photo feature by Safeyah Al-Hajri
SALALAH, Aug 5, (KUNA): Oman's southern governorate of Dhofar has long been renowned as the homeland of frankincense,

known as "white gold," with the prized resin remaining one of the region's most important historical, cultural and economic symbols for thousands of years.



A frankincense tree's bark bears the marks of careful harvesting in Dhofar, where skilled collectors extract resin using techniques passed down through generations.

Frankincense trees grow across Dhofar's dry mountainous areas, where harvesters make precise incisions in the bark using specialized tools, allowing milky sap to emerge before drying naturally into aromatic resin that is collected by hand during successive harvesting stages.

The harvesting process requires expertise passed down through generations, as producers carefully determine the timing and number of incisions each tree can withstand, while climate and geographical conditions play a decisive role in determining resin quality.

Frankincense trader Muammar Muslim Habis, who inherited the profession from his forefathers, said frankincense is not merely a natural product but an integral part of Dhofar's identity and heritage, reflecting the governorate's longstanding historical significance.

Habis said Dhofar produces several grades of frankincense, with the finest being Al-Hojari frankincense, which is considered the



Pieces of dried frankincense resin, celebrated as "white gold," highlight Dhofar's historic connection to the ancient trade.

world's highest-quality variety because of its exceptional purity, distinctive white or pale green color and rich aromatic fragrance.

He added that frankincense brought global recognition to Dhofar through ancient trade caravans and maritime routes, earning the title

"white gold," while continuing to preserve its symbolic, cultural and economic value to the present day.

Dublin says goodbye to its Oscar-winning son

DUBLIN, Aug 5, (AP): Hundreds of mourners including Irish musicians and entertainers filled a Dublin cathedral on Tuesday for the funeral of Academy Award-winning singer-songwriter Glen Hansard, who died in a motorcycle crash last week at the age of 56.

Actors Steve Coogan and Chris O'Dowd and musicians including Bono, Hozier, Declan O'Rourke and Imelda May were in the congregation alongside friends, family and fans who had queued for hours outside St. Patrick's Cathedral.

A large crowd watched on big screens outside as pallbearers carried a wicker coffin topped with flowers into the cathedral.

William Morton, the dean of the cathedral, said: "Glen's remarkable gifts and outstanding talent, which touched so many hearts, took him from the streets of Dublin to audiences across the globe."

The funeral service was interwoven with music, including a performance by Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder, who sang Hansard's "The Song of Good Hope" alongside Hansard's longstanding musical partner Markéta Irglová.

U2's Bono said of Hansard: "Everyone who met him, they just remembered the day they met him."

Bono held up his phone to play a message he'd received from singer and poet Patti Smith performing "a lullaby for Glen's family and friends," before reciting lyrics to U2's "Beautiful Day."



A picture of Irish musician Glen Hansard is carried out in front of the coffin as it leaves St Patrick's Cathedral after his funeral, in Dublin, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2026. (AP)

Hansard was killed in a single-vehicle crash on the outskirts of Dublin on July 29, hours after taking part in a trad music session at a pub.

His widow, Finnish poet Maire Saari, who thanked the police officers who came to his aid, read a poem she had written for him early in their relationship.

She said the couple's 3-year-old son was too young to attend or understand the funeral, but "the bright spirit he inherited from his father is with us."

Hansard was the longtime front man of Irish rock band The Frames and played a member of a Dublin soul band in the hit 1991 movie "The Commitments." He won an Oscar in 2008 for the song "Falling Slowly" from the movie "Once," in which he co-starred with Irglová. A stage adaptation won eight Tony Awards in 2012.

Hansard also was half of rock duo The Swell Season with Irglová and released solo albums including "Didn't He Ramble," which was nominated for a Grammy for Best Folk Album in 2016.

For many years he led a Christmas Eve busk outside Dublin's Gaiety Theatre, where members of the public gathered to see famous Irish musicians perform in aid of a homelessness charity.

Tributes have been paid by fellow musicians. Bruce Springsteen said on Instagram he was "heartbroken" at the loss of "a great musician, a good friend and a generous and gracious man."



Crowds gather to watch the funeral of Glen Hansard via a video link, outside of St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2026. (AP)

Music

Visitors witness musical project where notes take years to arrive

World’s slowest concert reaches 4% of 639-year Cage masterpiece



The organ, center, of the John Cage Organ Project Halberstadt is illuminated prior to a chord change of the organ inside the medieval Burchardi Church in Halberstadt, Germany, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026. (AP)



The score music “ORGAN/ASLSP (As SLOW as Possible)” of the John Cage Organ Project displayed near the Burchardi Church in Halberstadt, Germany, Wednesday, Aug. 5, 2026. (AP)



Kay Lautenbach, one of the board of trustees of the John Cage Organ Project Halberstadt, prepares a new pipe prior to a chord change of the organ inside the medieval Burchardi Church in Halberstadt, Germany, Aug. 5, 2026. (AP)

HALBERSTADT, Germany, Aug 5, (AP): A small organ in eastern Germany is the headliner of the world’s slowest concert. It has been playing the same piece of music by composer John Cage at a glacial pace for nearly 25 years. A rare chord change on Wednesday - from seven notes to eight once an A4 pipe is added - will represent the completion of about 4% of the 639-year endeavor of the John Cage Organ Project Halberstadt. While the project commenced in 2000, the performance began Sept. 5, 2001 - Cage’s 89th birthday - with a silent pause that lasted until Feb. 5, 2003, when the first chords could actually be heard inside the medieval Burchardi Church in Halberstadt, Germany. The “ORGAN²/ASLSP (As SLOW as Possible)” composition is scheduled to finish on Sept. 4, 2640. An electric-powered blower system sends wind into the organ to create a continuous sound. A chord change,

done manually, means that the sound of the organ pipes changes either because new sounds are added or existing sounds end. On Tuesday, Jeffrey Lependorf, executive director of the John Cage Trust in New York, said he was looking forward to comparing the difference between the sounds before and after Wednesday’s chord change. “You feel it through your whole body,” he told The Associated Press. “It resonates in this incredible way.” Cage, an American avant-garde composer, was born in Los Angeles in 1912 and died in New York in 1992. He was also a renowned music theorist, artist and philosopher whose only direction for this piece was to play it as slowly and as softly as possible. The interpretation of the composition in Halberstadt has resulted in the smallest unit being one month long. Other units - as well as silences - can last years.

The project has transformed the Burchardi Church, which was left largely in ruins before money was raised for a new roof and other fixes to make the piece a reality. The sound there envelopes visitors throughout the church and gives them new experiences to hear as they move through the empty space. “I think it really is the organ playing the church and not the other way around,” Lependorf said. “You move two inches in any direction and it sounds not subtly different - very different.” The piece will last 639 years, from 2001 to 2640. The time frame was chosen to be a tribute to a historic organ in Halberstadt that dates back to 1361, or 639 years before the project was initiated in 2000, according to Anneli Borgmann, chairwoman of the John Cage Organ Project Halberstadt’s board of trustees. The time frame allows the project’s stewards and visi-

tors to contemplate not only Cage’s legacy but their own as guardians of the organ and its sounds. They also wonder what the world will look like by the end of the piece - will the church still be standing? Will the city of Halberstadt, which has already lived through two world wars, survive climate change? The organ, at least, is built to last. Organ builder Johannes Hüfken said the pipes he’s crafted for this will last at least another 500 years. “This John Cage project is a good example of thinking ahead for the next generation - thinking outside the box, beyond the completely normal and traditional,” he said. Wednesday’s event will mark the piece’s 17th chord change. The next is set for Oct. 5, 2027, when the overall sound will be reduced by the E4 pipe. Inheritable “final tickets” for the Sept. 4, 2640 event are already being sold for 2,640 euros (\$3,045).

Gardening

Edelweiss: Bloom of the alps

Beautiful mountain flowers for stunning rock gardens

WASHINGTON, Aug 5, (AP): If you’re looking to plant a rare flower with a storied past that’s had a well-known song written about it, edelweiss will check all your boxes. My mother grew up in northeastern Italy, just over the Austrian border near the Alps, where edelweiss grow wild along steep rocky ledges. When I was a child, she told me stories about the elusive white flowers, and about local legends of young men dying after climbing and falling from the cliffs while trying to pick edelweiss for their beloveds. I know that’s pretty dark territory for a gardening column to veer into - and probably for a child’s bedtime story, too - but the good news is you can try growing the star-shaped, velvety flowers without risking life, limb or nightmares. Edelweiss (Leontopodium alpinum), which translates as “noble white” from German, has some very specific requirements endemic to its native range: alkaline rocky or sandy soil that drains well, low soil fertility, full sunlight and cold winter temperatures. If you can replicate those - and you likely can in the lower-humidity areas of horticultural zones 4-7, you can grow edelweiss. The plant gives bonus points to gardeners at high elevations. Sow seeds outdoors in late fall to provide the stratification - or winter chill - that they require for germination. Or plant pre-chilled seeds in early spring (the package label will tell you whether seeds have been stratified). Either way, press the seeds into the soil to ensure contact, but don’t bury them. They will sprout in spring and begin blooming in spring and summer of their second year. Alternatively, you can purchase starter plants, if you can find them, for transplanting into the garden right after the last frost date in spring. They should bloom after planting. Water the plants regularly throughout their first year as their roots become established. After that, they will seldom need supplemental watering. The plants, which can survive temperatures as low as minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit, thrive in barren, nutrient-poor soil, so don’t fertilize them unless they’re growing in a container, and even then, only minimally. Even if you never grow edelweiss, chances are you’ve made its acquaintance through its namesake song by Rodgers and Hammerstein in the 1965 movie “The Sound of Music,” which cemented it into pop culture. “Blossom of snow, may you bloom and grow,” the song says. And, despite luring young men to attempt foolish feats of bravery, the tiny flower has inspired generations of gardeners, hikers and movie lovers.



This image provided by Edelweiss Perennials shows an edelweiss plant in bloom. (AP)



This image released by NBC shows Phoebe Bridgers performing on “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon” in New York on July 14, 2026. (AP)

Artists turn online as TV’s biggest stages disappear

Space for music on late-night TV fades

NEW YORK, Aug 5, (AP): When CBS ended “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” earlier this year, it also shuttered the program’s robust music offerings - a major blow for artists whose television platform was already dwindling. Performing on late-night has historically been a unique avenue for musicians hoping to access new audiences - think of a rising Chappell Roan on “The Late Show” or even The Beatles on “The Ed Sullivan Show.” But when James Corden left CBS’ “The Late Late Show” in 2023, his program - and its coveted performance space - was never revived. NBC’s “Late Night With Seth Meyers” has cut back on live music, while ABC’s “Jimmy Kimmel Live!” reduced performances to twice a week. As it stands, only NBC’s “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon” consistently books live performances. Emerging artists still see incredible value in these performances - and are

hopeful that nascent online programming will offer a new alternative. March 3, 2014, was the day that changed everything for rock band Future Islands. The synth-pop group was a stalwart of America’s underground music scene due in no small part to charismatic frontman Samuel T. Herring and his idiosyncratic voice, somewhere between Tom Waits and Rammstein’s Till Lindemann. That day, they performed on “Late Show with David Letterman,” and the host was transfixed. “I’ll take all of that you got!” Letterman cheered, and the DIY band was cast into true virality. “At the time that we played Letterman, we were in a transitory period for the band,” said bassist William Cashion. They’d signed to the larger indie label 4AD Records, hired management and were promised a late-night TV spot but never thought it would pan out. “Our team, they told us, ‘It’ll be good for your fans and your friends and family, but it’s not re-

ally going to move the needle. These things don’t really do what they used to,’” he recalls. But that wasn’t the case. “All the festivals that initially turned us down all of a sudden wanted us to come play. Everything kind of shifted after that moment,” he said. “It was definitely a huge turning point and gave the band much greater exposure.” A dearth of late-night spots particularly affects independent acts - the kind that could really benefit from the exposure, just like Future Islands. Representatives for CBS, NBC and ABC did not return The Associated Press’ requests for comment. Chloë Walsh, co-founder of publicity firm The Oriel, points to the music bookers behind the scenes. “Of course, they have to book all the biggest things in the world, but they also have things that they want to champion,” she says. Fewer slots means developing artists are competing with big names for dwindling opportunities.

But there are other avenues to discover. “We’re kind of an anomaly in the way that our song and that performance took off,” says Cashion. “But we’ve seen other bands have TikTok viral hits and stuff like that.” There are many examples of artists cracking the code online: Singer-songwriter Gigi Perez’s career was launched with the TikTok smash “Sailor Song,” as was Malcolm Todd’s with a few viral hits, landing him a major label deal with Columbia Records. Indie band Beach Bunny saw their punky-pop go viral with “Prom Queen” just ahead of the pandemic, leading to performances on Kimmel and Fallon. Even legacy artists are experiencing second winds of music discovery: Weezer’s 2010s power-pop track “Go Away,” featuring Best Coast’s Bethany Cosentino, recently made the rounds on TikTok and became a top song for both on Spotify.

Armstrong’s boyhood house goes on sale with piece of space history

WAPAKONETA, Ohio, Aug 5, (AP): Inside Neil Armstrong’s boyhood home, at the top of a creaky stairway, sits his bedroom where he launched model airplanes out of the rear window to measure how far they’d fly. Hanging in the room now are autographed photos of astronauts who’ve visited the privately kept house to see where Armstrong’s first steps to the moon began. Owned by a retired history teacher devoted to preserving its past and charming character, the home is for sale for the first time in nearly 40 years. What will become of it remains uncertain. All over Armstrong’s hometown of Wapakoneta, there are reminders of his history-making moonwalk. But few places played a bigger role early in his journey than 601 W. Benton St. - the house where the Armstrong family settled in western Ohio when he was a young teenager. It’s where Armstrong built planes out of balsa wood and glue in the dining room and constructed a basement wind tunnel to test his models. He’d often pedal his bike from home to take flying lessons at an airstrip.



Left: Karen Mikesell, who has owned Neil Armstrong’s childhood home since 1988, talks about putting up her home for sale. Right: The former house of Neil Armstrong stands Friday, July 31, 2026, in Wapakoneta, Ohio. (AP)



space for the first time. After the 1969 moon landing, he taught at the University of Cincinnati.

Today, Armstrong’s two-story boyhood home is an occasional stop for visitors to the Armstrong Air and Space Museum in Wapakoneta, even though the house itself isn’t open for tours. When Karen Mikesell bought the place in 1988, she had no idea who once lived there until another teacher soon told her. As a history teacher who later became a school principal, Mikesell felt a responsibility to “keep it like the Armstrongs had it,” she said. She’s hosted nine astronauts, including Buzz Aldrin, who flew to the moon with Armstrong and Michael Collins in 1969. Aldrin stepped inside the bedroom upstairs a few years after Armstrong died in 2012, Mikesell recalled, “and the tears just streamed down his cheeks.” Over the years, she’s been given a moon rock and received a piece of gold foil that covered the Apollo 11 capsule - a gift from one of the Navy frogmen who helped recover the command module and its crew.

HEALTH/SCIENCE

'Don't wait for a child to express discomfort or pain to lighten load'

School backpack overload: Heavy bags can strain children's bodies

WASHINGTON, Aug. 5, (AP): Backpacks can be fashionable and functional, but they can also be too heavy - weighed down by digital devices, musical instruments, sports equipment and more. Some kids carry home a laptop or tablet and textbooks, too.

It's good to be prepared, but kids who walk to school or participate in extracurricular activities may be lugging more than their bodies can handle. Lockers and classroom storage aren't available everywhere - and a child carrying too much weight might not be ready to learn.

As families begin back-to-school shopping, here's how to know if your child's backpack is too heavy, and how to lighten their load.

The modern school backpack has evolved, but it hasn't necessarily gotten lighter. Whether students have textbooks, digital devices or both, they often are accompanied by notebooks, water bottles, lunch containers, workout clothes and more. Individually, those items may not seem heavy, but together they can add unnecessary strain to children's bodies.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, signs a backpack may be too heavy include a child leaning forward to support its weight

or having difficulty walking. Straps should not dig into shoulders.

Don't wait for a child to express discomfort or pain to lighten the load, experts say.

Dr. Sadika Kendi, a physician who chairs the academy's injury-prevention efforts, says back injuries are uncommon but possible, particularly if a child falls while carrying a heavy backpack.

"It's worse if, for example, they trip and fall and they have a huge, heavy backpack on their back. Then that's just more weight that could increase the severity of an injury," she said.

Although 10% to 15% of a child's body weight is often cited as a backpack guideline, there isn't enough evidence to establish a one-size-fits-all approach, Kendi said. Because children vary in size, strength, physical development and daily routines, caregivers should consider their child's individual needs and, in general, keep backpacks as light as possible.

After families receive back-to-school checklists for classroom materials, they should take an audit of what a child really must carry every day.

Samantha Ness, a history teacher in Phoenix, said parents should focus on making sure children have basic



Middle school students Claire Knoth and Brockton Lozano and high school student Zoie Knoth walk with their backpacks on July 31 in Flagstaff, Ariz. (AP)

supplies rather than getting caught up in trendy, decorative or expensive items. Her students have access to classroom textbooks but are still expected to carry a laptop and charger each day. As technology becomes more central to schoolwork, some students have stopped bringing paper, she said. They rely instead on their devices, which can also become distractions.

"When considering the things go-

ing into their backpacks, how is it going to help them be successful in the classroom?" said Ness, who has been teaching for about 10 years.

In Fairfax County, Virginia, the school district is bringing back math textbooks after a backlash against technology. That was a win for the group Fairfax County Parents for Intentional Technology, but it also means hard decisions about weight in backpacks.

Parents should think carefully about whether a child really needs to carry both books and a laptop every day, said mom Alix Fetch, a spokesperson for the parents group. Some elementary schools don't require students to take computers home, while others allow parents to opt out, she said. Block scheduling can also mean older students don't need every textbook every day.

Fetch said her 7-year-old typically carries lunch, a water bottle and occasionally a folder with homework or notes from the teacher. Even that can feel burdensome, she said, particularly when students move between classrooms for activities such as art or music. And the inside of the bag can still be messy.

"Kids are still kids. There's food in their backpack and water, and they're scrunching up papers," Fetch said.

As students get older, Ness said, backpacks can become more personal storage than school storage, carrying items such as makeup, nail polish and hair dryers.

"They're using their backpacks more as purses and like storage than they are actually using them for school," she said.

Experts recommend choosing a backpack that fits the child and has

two broad, padded shoulder straps, a padded back, compartments to distribute weight and a waist or chest strap to redistribute the load. The American Academy of Pediatrics also recommends teaching children to pick up and carry backpacks safely, including bending at the knees rather than the waist when lifting heavier bags to avoid strain.

Backpacks with wheels can be helpful, especially for children with injuries, but experts say they may be problematic in schools with stairs or crowded walkways, where they can pose a tripping hazard.

Children should remove their backpacks before riding in a moving vehicle, Kendi said, because wearing one can interfere with how a seat belt works during a crash or sudden stop. Instead, place the backpack beside the child, even if leaving it on seems more convenient during drop-off.

"Don't wear it in a car or any form of transportation while that car is moving," Kendi said. "It's just incredibly dangerous."

Regularly cleaning out backpacks can also help reduce unnecessary weight and keep track of notes, permission slips and assignments. Some teachers recommend doing it weekly to catch missing work, spills from leaky water bottles and accumulating crumbs.

Afghanistan's child deaths rising as food distributions face cuts, says United Nations

ROME, Aug. 5, (AP): Child malnutrition has reached critical levels in a third of Afghanistan's provinces and is expected to worsen as funding shortfalls force cuts in food distributions and other support, the U.N. World Food Program said Tuesday.

"We must act now to stem the rise in child deaths, which this crisis is provoking," John Aylieff, WFP's country director in Afghanistan, said in a statement, adding that "it is already too late for too many."

Afghanistan continues to recover from decades of conflict and upheaval, including the chaotic withdrawal of US forces in 2021 as the Taliban took power.

Olga Cherevko, spokesperson for the UN humanitarian office in Afghanistan, said nutrition specialists report that "wasting among children has worsened this year in over three-quarters of the country." Children suffering from a condition known as wasting are acutely malnourished, become very thin for their height, and need immediate therapeutic feeding.

But "too many children arrive at health facilities severely malnourished" while others never make it, Cherevko told reporters at UN headquarters by video from Afghanistan, where she has traveled across the country in recent months and weeks.

WFP said 142 health centers closed in 2025 because of aid reductions and more than 13,000 children lost access to nutrition treatment. It did not mention any specific donor, such as the United States, where the Trump administration has made sweeping cuts in foreign aid.

Nearly 3.7 million Afghan children are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition this year, along with 1.2 million pregnant and breastfeeding women, according to WFP.

The agency said 12 Afghan provinces have reached critical levels of acute child malnutrition, a record number. It cited a combination of conflict, unemployment, rising food prices, disease outbreaks, poor water and sanitation and reduced humanitarian funding.

WFP said supply shortages linked to conflict in the Middle East and the nine-month closure of Pakistan's border because of fighting between the neighbors have disrupted deliveries of nutrition products, leaving nearly one million malnourished women and children without essential nutrition services for five months.

From August through October, WFP said food distributions aimed at preventing famine in the worst-hit areas are being suspended due to lack of funding, even though the annual peak season for malnutrition is between July and October.

It said it urgently needs \$540 million over the next six months.

Humanitarian groups in Afghanistan are grappling with steep funding cuts. In February, Aylieff told The Associated Press that cuts had been "devastating" and were forcing the agency to turn away three out of four acutely malnourished children.

Funding for food assistance has dropped sharply - by about 59% since 2022 - even as needs have surged, according to a recent WFP report.

In June, the US pledged \$800 million to WFP, which said it will help more than 38 million people in at least 37 countries.

Cherevko of the UN humanitarian office said the larger \$1.71 billion humanitarian appeal for Afghanistan is just over 26% funded, which is "alarming," especially since malnutrition and other indicators are worsening.



Afghan women care for their children in the malnutrition ward at Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan on Feb. 15. (AP)

WHO chief arrives in Congo to support Ebola response as cases near 4,000

KINSHASA, Congo, Aug. 5, (AP): The head of the World Health Organization arrived in Congo on Wednesday as aid workers said the world's fastest-growing Ebola outbreak is spreading at an "alarming" rate and some health workers are striking over lack of pay.



Ghebreyesus

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was scheduled to meet with partners and President Félix Tshisekedi in the capital, Kinshasa, the WHO country office told The Associated Press. It was his second visit since the outbreak was declared in mid-May.

The Ebola outbreak had 3,874 confirmed cases, including 1,751 deaths, as of Monday, according to data published overnight by Congo's Ministry of Health.

In Ituri, the outbreak's epicenter, families said many frontline workers have gone on strike, worsening access to healthcare that was already challenged by rebel

conflict in one of Congo's most remote and vulnerable areas, its east near the borders of South Sudan, Uganda and Rwanda.

While some frontline workers say they have started receiving payment in the last week for work done since the outbreak began, they are demanding improved wages.

Anicet Baluku, a resident of Bunia, Ituri's capital, blamed the death of his two brothers from Ebola on the strike. "We urge the authorities to quickly find a solution to prevent other families from experiencing the same tragedy," he told the AP.

The outbreak has eclipsed all other Ebola outbreaks in history in its speed of transmission and is the second-largest outbreak on record, behind the 2014-2016 West Africa outbreak that recorded more than 28,000 cases, including over 11,000 deaths.

The Bundibugyo virus that is causing this outbreak has no approved treatment or vaccine, and local officials believe it began in a remote area long before it was declared on May 15.

Amazon forest loss holds steady

Colombia's deforestation rises slightly

BOGOTA, Colombia, Aug. 5, (AP): Colombia's government said nationwide deforestation increased slightly in 2025 but that it had still surpassed its four-year target to reduce forest loss under President Gustavo Petro, with pressure on the Amazon remaining largely unchanged in the administration's final year.

The Environment Ministry and IDEAM, the country's meteorological agency, said late Friday that Colombia lost 119,483 hectares (295,000 acres) of forest in 2025 - about the size of Los Angeles. That was a 5% increase from the previous year.

Officials emphasized that despite the increase, forest loss remained 31% below 2021 levels, surpassing the government's goal of reducing annual deforestation by at least 20% from that baseline.

While Colombia has kept deforestation well below 2021 levels, the latest figures underscore how difficult it has been to sustain the dramatic reductions achieved in 2023.

Illegal land grabbing, cattle ranching and expanding infrastructure continue to put heavy pressure on the Amazon, even as authorities say they are increasingly targeting the criminal networks that profit from



The Putumayo River flows near visible spots of deforestation on the outskirts of Puerto Asis, Colombia on Nov. 26, 2025. (AP)

clearing the rainforests

Petro, who leaves office next week, made protecting the Amazon a cornerstone of his environmental agenda. His administration also passed a landmark cattle traceability law aimed at preventing beef linked to illegal deforestation from entering supply chains.

The figures provide a benchmark for the incoming government of President-elect Abelardo de la Es-

priella, who has pledged to expand oil and mining development while reviewing several of Petro's environmental policies.

The 2025 statistics were released after weeks of criticism from incoming Environment Minister Fabio Arjona, who accused the outgoing government in a post on X of delaying publication, saying it had withheld the figures because it knew "the scenario is tragic."

Can we remove or decrease spaces between atoms or molecules?

The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts.

□ □ □

By Robin Macaluso
University of Texas at Arlington

Curious Kids is a series for children of all ages. If you have a question you'd like an expert to answer, send it to curiouskidsus@theconversation.com.

Can we remove or decrease spaces between atoms or molecules? - Paras, age 15, Uttarakhand, India

Have you ever seen a beautiful bunch of flowers packed tightly into a vase?

A florist has to wiggle and arrange them perfectly so there are no empty holes.

There are times when nature acts like a florist. Nature takes tiny building blocks called atoms and molecules and packs them together to fill up space.

In gases, such as air, atoms and molecules are separated from each other by lots of space. In solids, such as a rock or a metal spoon, atoms are generally more closely packed. And in liquids, distances between atoms tend to fall somewhere in between.

It's impossible to completely remove all the space between atoms and molecules. To understand why, picture atoms and molecules as spherical balls. Packing balls into a box leaves empty gaps between them, and no amount of moving the balls around will get rid of those gaps. But natural forces such as heat or pressure can reduce the space between atoms and molecules that make up a particular substance, or change how they are arranged.

I am a chemist studying the science of crystals. Scientists like me have found that we can mimic those forces in the lab - heating substances to extremely high temperature or squeezing them with a huge amount of pressure. In doing so, we rearrange their atoms and molecules to create materials with new features - sometimes by design and sometimes by surprise.

To see how different a material can look and feel depending on how its atoms are packed, think about the element carbon, one of Earth's most common elements and an important component of all living organisms.

At room temperature and everyday air pressure, carbon exists as graphite - the material in pencils that people often call pencil lead. The carbon atoms in graphite form flat, six-sided - or hexagonal - sheets stacked loosely on top of each other. When you write, the force of your hand slides these layers apart, leaving a trail of black carbon on your paper.

When squeezed with extreme pressure while it's heated up, graphite transforms into a diamond. Scientists call this change a phase transition. The ingredients didn't change - it's still just carbon - but the pressure rearranges the atoms from flat sheets into three-dimensional shapes called tetrahedra. This arrangement keeps atoms from sliding away from each other and makes diamonds one of the hardest materials in the world.

How much squeezing does it take? To turn graphite

into diamond, you need a temperature of 1,832 degrees Fahrenheit (1,000 degrees Celsius) and massive pressure. Imagine the weight of 10 heavy elephants all balancing on the tiny point of a pin, right in the middle of hot lava.

Deep inside the Earth, about 100 miles (161 kilometers) down, this process happens naturally but takes billions of years. Since the 1950s, scientists have learned how to recreate it in the lab to synthesize diamonds.

They do this with the help of specialized equipment such as a multi-anvil press to provide the massive squeeze. In this device, extremely hard blocks fit together snugly like puzzle pieces around a sample. By squeezing the blocks together with the sample in the center, scientists apply an immense amount of pressure on it. They also heat the material with a laser or small furnace.

Graphite treated in this way for several hours becomes a synthetic diamond. Other substances also transform.

For example, companies that make cosmetics often use a substance called boron nitride because at room temperature and pressure it has a soft texture and the perfectly light touch of sparkle people love in makeup. Squeezing and heating boron nitride transforms the arrangement of its atoms from 2D hexagonal sheets into 3D cubic boron nitride.

In this form, boron nitride becomes what scientists call a superhard material, second in hardness to diamond. People use it to make industrial tools such as drill bits and grinding wheels for heavy machinery.

By forcing atoms together with pressure and heat, scientists can control how a material carries electricity, how magnetic it is, and how it handles heat. For example, a team of chemists working with iron atoms in a mineral called jarosite, found in the mountains of Utah and New Mexico, could control its magnetic properties by cooling or heating it to change the atom arrangement.

Sometimes, scientists discover new materials by surprise, such as the 2025 discovery of the first gold-hydrogen compound. People have generally believed that gold doesn't react with other elements, but it turns out that squeezing and heating a sample of gold caused it to form chemical bonds with hydrogen in the atmosphere. This discovery is so new that scientists are still learning about this material's properties.

Whether it happens naturally or in a high-tech lab, transforming the way atoms pack together can turn ordinary substances into extraordinary new materials.

This article has been updated to remove an incorrect description about the space between molecules in ice.

Hello, curious kids! Do you have a question you'd like an expert to answer? Ask an adult to send your question to CuriousKidsUS@theconversation.com. Please tell us your name, age and the city where you live.

And since curiosity has no age limit - adults, let us know what you're wondering, too. We won't be able to answer every question, but we will do our best. (AP)

‘It’s part of a wider push to financially reward elite athletes’

Top European track and field performers to receive \$58,000 bonuses

BIRMINGHAM, England, Aug 5, (AP): Ten track-and-field athletes with the best performances at next week’s European championships will each receive a bonus of 50,000 euros (\$58,000), the continent’s governing body for athletics has confirmed.

European Athletics said its “gold crown initiative,” launched at the 2024 edition in Rome, will reward athletes across five groups of events in Birmingham for both men and women.

The men’s and women’s groups of events are: sprints

and hurdles; middle and long distance; throws; jumps; road, combined events and relays.

A bonus - and gold crown - will go to the athlete in each group of events who “achieves the highest scoring performance in their respective finals using World Athletics scoring tables,” European Athletics said.

Olympic champion pole vaulter Armand “Mondo” Duplantis of Sweden was among the inaugural recipients.

The 500,000 euros in performance bonuses matches the total from 2024 with the goal of “attracting the best athletes and



Sweden's Armand Duplantis in action during Men's Pole Vault final at the Diamond League London athletics meet, London. (AP)

creating the best possible event for fans, sponsors and broadcasters alike,” European Athletics said.

It’s part of a wider push to financially reward elite athletes.

Track and field became the first sport to pay prize money at the Olympics when World Athletics paid \$50,000 to gold medalists at the 2024 Paris Games. It was a symbolic break with the amateur past of the Olympics.

In June, the International Olympic Committee pledged to pay up to \$140 million to athletes through the 2028 Los An-

geles Summer Games by creating a fund for \$10,000 grants - not prize money officially - for which they can apply after competing.

In September, World Athletics will stage a new global championships with \$150,000 prizes for gold medalists. The first Ultimate Championships will be hosted in Budapest from Sept. 11-13, showcasing Olympic, world and Diamond League champions over three evening sessions.

The seven-day European championships begin next Monday at Alexander Stadium.

Mercury defeats Sky behind Copper’s 31-point explosion

Valkyries hold off Tempo in rematch

CHICAGO, Aug 5, (AP): Kahleah Copper scored 20 of her 31 points in the second half and Kelsey Plum added 20 points in her Phoenix debut to help the Mercury beat the Chicago Sky 106-101.

Plum, who was traded from Los Angeles on Saturday, made a 3-pointer from the corner with 53 seconds left to give Phoenix 103-101 lead.

After a timeout with 11 seconds remaining, Phoenix forward DeWanna Bonner blocked a layup attempt by Courtney Vandersloot and then sank two free throws at the other end for a four-point lead. Copper sealed it with a steal.

Alyssa Thomas had 19 points, 15 rebounds and 12 assists for her WNBA-leading 27th career triple-double for Phoenix (12-19). Bonner finished with 14 points and Valerieane Ayayi added 10 off the bench. Plum was 6 of 10 from the field with three 3-pointers in her first game since June 21.

Vandersloot, DiJonai Carrington and Kamilla Cardoso scored 16 points apiece for Chicago (11-19). Vandersloot also had 10 assists and Cardoso grabbed 13 rebounds. Sydney Taylor scored 14 points in 17 minutes before leaving with a left groin injury.

Carrington began the fourth quarter with a 3-pointer to give Phoenix an 80-78 lead, its first since it was 33-32 in the second.

Valkyries 92, Tempo 82

In San Francisco, Janelle Salaun scored 21 points, Kayla Thornton hit two quick 3-pointers and two more early in the second half on the way to 20 points, and the Golden State Valkyries held off the Toronto Tempo for a second straight game.

Veronica Burton contributed 12 points, eight rebounds and seven assists for Golden State in the second straight matchup of the teams at sold-out Chase Center after the Valkyries beat the Tempo 96-79 on Sunday night.



Las Vegas Aces center A'ja Wilson (22) gives a thumbs up during a WNBA basketball game in Las Vegas. (AP)

Thornton took an elbow from Aneesah Morrow to her throat area with 4:27 remaining in the third quarter that was ruled a Flagrant 1 upon replay review.

Morrow made her debut with Toronto after being acquired in a trade with the Connecticut Sun on Friday. She entered with 4:57 left in the first quarter and hit a 3 about a minute later for the first of her eight points to go with five rebounds.

Nyara Sabally scored 22 points and Maria Conde had 17 points and six rebounds for the Tempo, who welcomed back leading scorer Marina Mabrey after she sat out Sunday with a neck injury. Mabrey scored 12 points on 4-for-11 shooting over 35 minutes in Toronto’s seventh straight loss and 11th in 12.

Salaun shot 8 for 12 with four 3-pointers to give her 61 points over the three meetings with the Tempo.

Gabby Williams missed her initial three shots before making a layup with 5:24 left in the first half and finished with 10 points and seven

rebounds.

Toronto made 13 of its first 22 shots - going 8 for 14 from 3-point range - to take a 38-25 lead midway through the second quarter. But the Valkyries ended the half on a 16-4 run to pull within 42-41 at the break.

Liberty 95, Storm 83

In New York, Breanna Stewart scored 24 points and Jonquel Jones added 20 to help the New York Liberty beat the Seattle Storm.

Sabrina Ionescu had 18 points for the Liberty (18-13), who have won five of their past six games. The previous four victories came by a total of eight points.

Monday’s game started a three-game homestand for New York this week. The teams will play again Wednesday night.

New York led 70-67 late in the third quarter before scoring the final nine points of the period to take a 12-point advantage heading into the fourth quarter. Stewart had four points during the spurt.

The run continued at the start the

fourth with Marine Johannes and Han Xu for the Liberty, who went up 85-67. Seattle could get no closer than nine the rest of the way.

Flau’jae Johnson scored 25 points, while Natisha Hiedeman and Dominique Malonga each added 17 for Seattle (6-26).

The game served as a homecoming for Seattle coach Sonia Raman, who was an assistant in New York last season. It’s been a rough first year for Raman as the Storm are currently last in the standings. They’ve dropped nine straight games, but the future is bright with young stars Johnson, Malonga and Awa Fam.

New York jumped all over Seattle with Ionescu, Jones and Stewart combining to score the team’s first 26 points. The Liberty led 28-18 after one quarter. Seattle rallied behind Hiedeman to get within 50-43 at the half.

About 90 minutes before tipoff, Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was courtside, chatting with Jones, Ionescu and Stewart and Liberty coach Chris DeMarco.

Aces 109, Dream 87

In Atlanta, Jackie Young had 28 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for her third career triple-double. A’ja Wilson added 23 points and the Las Vegas Aces beat the Atlanta Dream.

Young secured the triple-double on an assist to Brianna Turner with 2:21 left in the fourth quarter to give Las Vegas a 101-81 lead.

The Aces led by as many as 28 points.

NaLyssa Smith scored 18 points, and Chelsea Gray had 17 points and six assists for Las Vegas (21-9). Wilson also had her 587th blocked shot to pass Lauren Jackson for sixth on the WNBA’s career list.

Angel Reese had 23 points and 16 rebounds for her 20th double-double of the season for Atlanta (18-11), which had a five-game winning streak halted. Reese has recorded a 20-point double-double in five of her last six games. Rhyné Howard added 19 points.

Atlanta finished 4 for 25 from 3-point range, while Young went 4 for 7.

Jayhawks land elite matchups

Kansas signs five-year Players Era Festival deal through 2031

LAWRENCE, Kan., Aug 5, (AP): Kansas has signed a five-year contract for the Jayhawks to participate in the Players Era Festival, tying one of college basketball’s storied programs to one of the more innovative, forward-thinking tournaments in the sport.

The Players Era began in Las Vegas in 2024 with the idea of funneling at least \$1 million toward each participating school’s name, image and likeness fund. Oregon wound up beating Alabama in the finale of the eight-team competition.

The tournament expanded last year to 18 teams, when it went from an elimination-style tournament to a pool-based system where margin of victory mattered, and a four-team women’s event began. The Jayhawks beat Tennessee in the third-place game of the men’s event, while eventual national champion Michigan routed Gonzaga to win the championship.

Along with at least \$1 million in guaranteed payouts, an additional \$12 million was allocated to teams based on performance.

Now, the Jayhawks are locked into the tournament through the 2030-31 season, giving coach Bill Self’s team a marquee early-season showcase while ensuring the program has a lucrative NIL stream in an era where finances matter more than ever.

“The Players Era commitment to college basketball has been very impressive,” Self said. “They have brought in high level teams which creates great matchups during the pre-conference season. The Players Era has also produced great NIL opportunities for our players.

“Being locked in through the 2030-31 season is a reinforcement of the direction the Players Era is moving. Not only is it great for our players but it allows our fans to plan vacations to come cheer on the Jayhawks.”



Seth Berger

The Players Era is expanding again this year to 24 teams, but it is splitting into an eight-team tournament and a 16-team event. Both will be played in Las Vegas over two weeks in November; the Jayhawks are part of the eight-team bracket along with Florida, Rutgers, Notre Dame, UNLV and Big 12 rivals Houston and West Virginia.

Michigan, Alabama, Tennessee, St. John’s and Gonzaga are among the high-profile teams in the 16-team competition.

Last year, the Players Era and the Big 12 announced a five-year deal in which the league would assume a 15% stake and guaranteed minimum annual revenues in exchange for sending at least eight teams to the tournament. The Jayhawks, Cougars and Mountaineers will be joined by Baylor, Iowa State, Kansas State, TCU and Texas Tech at the tournaments this November.

“We’re grateful to have Kansas, one of the preeminent collegiate basketball programs, return for the next several years,” Players Era CEO said. “It’s an extraordinary testament to what we’re building here with Player’s Era - a competition that delivers an exceptional experience for both fans and student-athletes alike in an atmosphere that feels like March in November.”

Move targets more Derby entrants

Preakness returns to three weeks after Kentucky Derby

MARYLAND, Aug 5, (AP): The Preakness Stakes is moving to three weeks and a day after the Kentucky Derby and is set to be run on a Sunday for the first time.

Maryland Gov. Wes Moore and the Maryland Jockey Club announced the move Wednesday. No Triple Crown race has ever been run on a Sunday in the century-plus-old history of the series.

The shift marks a major change on the horse racing calendar, following significant debate and speculation. Except for 2020 during the pandemic, the Preakness has taken place on the third Saturday in May, two weeks after the Kentucky Derby, since 1950.

“We acknowledge the great history of the traditional Triple Crown spacing between races but recognize that change must always be examined,” Maryland Jockey Club CEO Bill Knauf said. “This is common in all professional sports. Now is the time for the Preakness.”

The aim is to get more Derby horses to participate in the second leg of the Triple Crown. For decades, it was normalcy but has become increasingly rare in recent years.

Two consecutive and three of the past five Derby winners have bypassed the Preakness to aim for the final jewel, the Belmont Stakes in June. Of the 95 horses who ran in the Derby dating to 2022, just 13 have gone to the Preakness (13.7%) with just one winner in that group.

“We believe the Preakness and the entire Triple Crown series are positioned for growth and great success,” Knauf said. “This extra week between the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness opens the Preakness to potential participants who use modern training methods.”

For at least next year, it has the chance to produce the opposite effect, with the Belmont scheduled for June 5. Going from a three-week to



In this file photo, horses compete during the 151st running of the Preakness Stakes horse race at Laurel Park in Laurel, Md. (AP)

a 13-day gap between the Preakness and Belmont could force owners and trainers to choose between them, given that modern 3-year-old thoroughbreds typically get significantly more time off.

Hall of Famer Bob Baffert, who with American Pharoah in 2015 and Justify in 2018 is the only trainer to win the Triple Crown since Affirmed in 1978, said in a social media post Monday that if he has the right horse from the Kentucky Derby, he will continue to go to the Preakness annually. That was in response to the unveiling of a new championship series of races at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Belmont Park on Long Island and Saratoga Race Course in upstate New York and does not - for now - include the Preakness.

Future changes to the schedule are always possible beyond 2027. The shift does put the Preakness on the Sunday of Memorial Day Weekend beginning in 2028 and running through ‘31.

“We believe this creates tremendous excitement for our local economy and businesses,” Knauf said. “Baltimore will become the place to be on Memorial Day weekends, as the spotlight of the racing world descends on Pimlico.”

The change comes with an extension of the media rights agreement with NBC Sports through 2032.

Australian Open 1 Point Slam set to return

Alcaraz pulls out of Cincinnati Open because of a lingering wrist injury

CINCINNATI, Aug 5, (AP): Carlos Alcaraz withdrew Tuesday from the Cincinnati Open because of a lingering right wrist injury that has sidelined him since April.

The No. 2-ranked Spaniard was hoping to return to defend his title in the hard-court tournament, which serves as an important warm-up for the U.S. Open.

“We know Carlos is doing everything he can to get back to playing tournaments as soon as possible,” tournament director Bob Moran said in a statement. “We wish him the best with his recovery and look forward to welcoming him back to Cincinnati in the future.”

Alcaraz last played at the Barcelona Open, then missed the French Open and the entire grass-court season, including Wimbledon.

He is entered in the U.S. Open, where he is the defending champion. Recent photos and videos on social media have shown the seven-time Grand Slam winner on the practice courts, so it was thought he would be ready to play in the Cincinnati event that begins Aug. 11.

Meanwhile, the million-dollar 1 Point Slam is returning to the first



In this file photo, Carlos Alcaraz, of Spain, returns a shot against Daniil Medvedev, of Russia, during a semifinal match at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament in Indian Wells, Calif. (AP)

Grand Slam tennis tournament of 2027.

Australian Open organizers announced Wednesday that the crowd favorite from last January would again be offering a top prize of a million Australian dollars (\$705,000 at current exchange rates) when it is held next year before the Jan. 17-31 main draw at

Melbourne Park.

Jordan Smith, a little-known local amateur player beat Jannik Sinner and went on to make himself a millionaire in Australian dollars after winning the 1 Point Slam. The Australian won on the third stroke of the final when Joanna Garland, the women’s No. 117 from Taiwan, sent a two-handed backhand wide.

I’m very proud of where we already are: Berg

New MLS commissioner aims to continue league’s growth trajectory

LOS ANGELES, Aug 5, (AP): Incoming Major League Soccer Commissioner Larry Berg sees his role as continuing the trajectory of the league under his soon-to-be predecessor, Don Garber.

The 30-team league that Graber grew during his 27-year tenure now looks to Berg to capitalize on the success of the World Cup this past summer and guide the transition to a new international schedule next year.

“I think one of the reasons that I raised my hand is I feel like I have the enthusiasm and the passion to hopefully have other people, in some cases, see it through my eyes and understand where we’re going and where it can go and what what it can be,” Berg told The Associated Press. “I’m very proud of where we already are. I think we’ve come a very, very long way.”

Berg, a co-owner of LAFC, will formally take over as commissioner at the start of next year. Garber, who has served as the league’s commissioner since 1999, will help guide the transition before moving into a new role as chairman.

Garber said the ideal candidate would unite the entire MLS ecosystem around a shared vision. And he believes the league will have that under Berg, who will become just the third commissioner in the history of the league.

“I think he’s convinced the ownership through a very comprehensive process that he has what it takes to do the two most important things, which is to create that vision, and then to get the owners to unite around it,” Garber said. “That requires great relationships. It requires the capability to put the plan to-

gether and do the work. ... He (Berg) is super smart. He doesn’t lead with ego. He leads with understanding perspectives, and I think that’s a super important part of being the commissioner.”

The 60-year-old Berg, who has served as co-chair of the MLS sporting and competition committee, will divest his ownership interest in LAFC. He was formally introduced as the incoming commissioner on Tuesday at the league’s New York headquarters, a day after he received the required two-thirds of the votes from the owners.

2”First of all, he loves soccer, and I think next to his family, soccer is the most important thing in his life. Second of all, he knows the league really well. We have 30 great owners, and all of them are very involved in the league. But Larry is, I think it’s safe to say, has been over the last five years the most involved owner,” Columbus Crew owner Jimmy Haslam said. “He understands what we do well, where we have opportunity. I think he has a great relationship with all the owners. Going through this process certainly enhanced that.”

Berg previously held ownership stakes in Italian club AS Roma, as well as English league team Swansea. Under Berg’s ownership, LAFC won the MLS Cup in 2022, and the Supporters’ Shield in 2019.

Under Garber’s watch, the league has expanded from 12 to 30 teams. He introduced the league’s marketing arm, Soccer United Marketing, encouraged the construction of soccer-specific stadiums and spurred the growth of an

academy system to develop players in the United States.

Five clubs, Inter Miami, the home of Lionel Messi, LAFC, LA Galaxy, Atlanta United and NYCFC are valued at more than \$1 billion, according to Forbes.

At the start, Berg will oversee the league’s shift to a new calendar, with the season running from on a summer to spring schedule to more align with its international counterparts. Currently the league plays a late winter to late fall schedule.

Following the conclusion of the current season, MLS will play a shortened 14-game “sprint season” in early 2027 before the league switches to its new schedule, kicking off in July with the league championship to be played in May 2028.

Berg will also be charged with negotiating a new media rights deal. The current contract with Apple TV ends in 2029. The league is also looking at changes to roster rules.

“This has been a passion my whole life. This sport and some of the great joys of my life have been involved in the LAFC and involved with the sporting competition committee,” Berg said. “I have a lot of ideas. I feel like we’re at a point where a tremendous amount of success has been achieved with the games and the live gameday entertainment experience, etc. But as the World Cup showed, you can be incredibly happy and very successful, but somehow there’s always more. You want to get to that next step.”

PGA Tour regular season ‘ends’ after strange year without dominant player



Scottie Scheffler hits his tee shot on the 11th hole during the second round of the U.S. Open golf tournament at Shinnecock Hills Golf Club in Southampton, N.Y. (AP)

Stars struggle for consistency

WASHINGTON, Aug 5, (AP): Billy Horschel was optimistic as ever in January to start his 16th year on the PGA Tour. He chose not to add a few tournaments late in 2025 when returning from hip surgery, and that probably cost him a sure spot in the Masters because he fell out of the top 50 in the world.

There were no regrets.

“I’m betting on myself,” Horschel said at the Sony Open.

He has reached the end of the regular season at No. 176 in the world, which isn’t nearly as troubling as being No. 107 in the FedEx Cup in a year when his full exempt status is set to expire.

It’s a reminder how golf offers no guarantees - meritocracy works both ways - and Horschel has plenty of company at the Wyndham Championship, the final regular-season event that determines the top 70 who advance to the post-season and are assured a full card for 2027.

Jason Day, who 10 years ago was No. 1 in the world and looked unbeatable at times, is at No. 75 in the FedEx Cup. He started the year with a runner-up finish behind Scottie Scheffler at The American Express but has had only one other top 10 this season.

Particularly glaring another 11 spots down the standings at No. 86 is five-time major champion Brooks Koepka, who was all the talk back in January when he became the first player who bolted from LIV Golf (at just the right time as it turns out) to rejoin the PGA Tour.

Koepka had been gone nearly four years, long enough to not fully understand how the

points system worked. His immediate goal was to get into the \$20 million signature events - one of the conditions of his return was being ineligible for sponsor exemptions to those tournaments. He didn’t make it into any of them.

And right when he was in position to contend - two shots out of the lead going into the weekend of the Canadian Open - he had a freak injury in his hand that one round later forced him to withdraw.

Now he has one tournament left to reach the postseason. He needs at least a fourth-place finish at the Wyndham Championship, a tall task considering he has only one top 10 this year. At least he is secure for two more years from winning the PGA Championship at Oak Hill in 2023.

But it’s been a strange year for so many players accustomed to smoother waters.

Who would have predicted before the first tee shot of 2026 that Chris Gotterup would have more wins than Scottie Scheffler and Rory McIlroy combined?

No one will - or should - be concerned with Scheffler. He won his season opener in the California desert, and nothing else. He also has five runner-up finishes and five other finishes in the top 4. Four of those runner-up finishes paid out more than his lone victory.

The margins are thin in golf, even for the No. 1 player in the world.

McIlroy isn’t the least bit stressed that his one title this year was a repeat at Augusta National. Yes, he would love to win another FedEx Cup title. Odds are it would be sweeter to get another Race to Dubai title in Europe, especially at the expense of Patrick Reed.

Cameron Young is the defending champion at the Wyndham Championship. And to think it was only a year ago when Young had never won on

the PGA Tour. Since then, he was a lone bright spot for the Americans in his Ryder Cup debut, he won The Players Championship and a signature event at Doral, and he had at least a share of the Sunday lead at two majors without bagging one.

But there’s something else about Young and this odd season.

He won the Cadillac Championship when he was No. 4 in the world. That was May 3, and no from the top 10 has won a PGA Tour event since then. It’s not getting any easier out there, if it ever was.

Half of the PGA Tour members among the top 30 in the world ranking have yet to win this year.

The world ranking of the other three major champions sounds like numbers drawn in Bingo - 44 (Aaron Rai at the PGA Championship), 34 (Wyndham Clark at the U.S. Open) and 56 (Ryan Fox at the British Open).

It was the first time three major champions in one year were outside the top 30 since 2009 delivered Angel Cabrera (69), Lucas Glover (71), Stewart Cink (33) and Y.E. Yang (110).

Brian Rolapp mentioned three guiding principles when he was introduced as CEO at the Tour Championship last year. First on his list was parity, and he probably didn’t know how right he was when he said, “The PGA Tour has incredible, competitive parity and balance among its players.”

“Everybody wants to go into an event not knowing who’s going to win,” Rolapp said.

Show of hands who had Rai winning the PGA Championship against the strongest field in the majors. Or Gary Woodland winning the Houston Open just over two years after returning from brain surgery, one of the most emotional wins of this crazy season.

European leagues turn up pressure on FIFA chief

LONDON, Aug 5, (AP): The association of European soccer leagues called for governance reform of FIFA on Wednesday, adding to the mounting pressure on president Gianni Infantino following his failed plan to sell stakes in the World Cup.

On the day that Infantino reportedly held a meeting with senior staff in Rabat, Morocco, European Leagues, which includes top competitions like the Premier League, La Liga and Serie A, described the proposal as “dangerous” and said it pointed to deeper concerns about how world soccer’s governing body operates.

It said it raised “serious questions about FIFA’s governance, internal culture and decision-making.”

“Now more than ever, FIFA requires governance reform that ensures that all relevant stakeholders have a formal role in decisions that shape the future of our game.”

In the statement European Leagues hit out at the possibility of further expanding the World Cup to 64 teams and said “FIFA must not be allowed to continue taking unilaterally disruptive decisions.”

It said that until there was reform it would reject the “expansion or creation” of FIFA competitions.

Portugal and Real Madrid great Luis Figo also called for Infantino to step down, saying he had “debased the office.”

The latest condemnations come after a

tumultuous week, which has raised questions about his presidency of FIFA ahead of elections in March.

European soccer’s governing body UEFA has applied the most intense pressure by voting to boycott the World Cup if Infantino pressed ahead with the controversial plans to sell profits in its top competition through a commercial subsidiary called FIFA Forward Enterprise (FFE) that would run tournaments.

Even after Infantino’s climb-down UEFA said it had lost confidence in FIFA’s leadership - possibly paving the way for a challenge to his presidency. The governing body for North and Central American and Caribbean soccer (CONCACAF) also said FIFA leadership had “stopped putting football first.”

On Tuesday top FIFA officials Arsène Wenger and secretary-general Mattias Grafström distanced themselves from the FFE plans, which emphasized divisions within the organization that were evident when Infantino’s senior adviser Carlos Cordeiro resigned last week and chief operating officer Kevin Lamour said staff were “deceived” by the president’s lack of openness.

Wednesday’s summit in Rabat was dubbed a “crisis meeting” in media reports amid growing expectation that Infantino will be challenged in next year’s election when he was aiming for to win a fourth and final term in office.



Best of the Rest

Preakness-winning jockey Albarado dies: Former jockey Robby Albarado, who won the Preakness twice during his lengthy riding career in the top tier of the sport, has died. He was 52.

A spokesperson for Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky, said the track was informed of Albarado’s death by multiple friends and family members. Albarado was hospitalized in recent days for a procedure to insert a stent to alleviate a blockage near his heart, according to trainer Kenny McPeck, who employed Albarado as an exercise rider.

“Saying goodbye to someone who left us too soon is extremely difficult,” Churchill Downs president Mike Anderson said in a statement. “We extend our deepest condolences to his family and numerous friends.” (AP)

□ □ □

Le Clos says his home was destroyed in fire: Olympic champion swimmer Chad le Clos says his home in South Africa was destroyed in a fire a day after he became the most decorated athlete ever at the Commonwealth Games.

Le Clos said in a post on his Instagram account that his apartment in Cape Town was one of several in the block to be gutted in a fire on July 30 while he was at the games in Glasgow, Scotland.

The 34-year-old South African won a record 21st Commonwealth Games medal a day before the fire with a bronze in the men’s 4x100-meter medley relay. (AP)

World Cup hero Torres throws first pitch at Yankee Stadium

NEW YORK, Aug 5, (AP): Ferran Torres, who scored the winning goal for Spain in the World Cup final last month, threw out the ceremonial first pitch at Yankee Stadium.

Wearing a white Yankees jersey with the No. 7, Torres threw his pitch from in front of the mound to infielder José Caballero, a noted fan of Torres’ Barcelona.

“Not too much to be honest, but I just want to enjoy the game,” Torres said when asked what he knows about the Yankees. “I see some of the players and I wish them the best of luck.”

Torres is negotiating a transfer to Paris Saint-Germain after scoring 16 goals for Barcelona last season. He has one year remaining on his contract and has scored 41 goals in 140 games during five seasons with Barcelona after spending two seasons with Manchester City of



Ferran Torres of Team Spain throws out a ceremonial first pitch before a baseball game between the New York Yankees and the St. Louis Cardinals in New York. (AP)

the Premier League and three with Valencia of La Liga.

Torres declined to discuss the potential transfer Tuesday. Dur-

ing an appearance on NBC’s “Today” show on Monday, Torres addressed the situation by saying: “Barça have to show they love me. They can come and negotiate, and in the end, everything will be discussed.

“Whenever (teams like PSG) want you, it’s a good thing. I have a contract with Barça. It’s true that in football you never know what might happen, but the good thing is that, since I have a contract, I can wait and decide for myself.”

Torres was a second-half substitute in Spain’s 1-0 victory over Argentina in the World Cup final and scored in the 106th minute. He pounced on a bouncing ball in the box and used his left foot to bury a shot just under the crossbar.

“To be honest my life has changed a little bit, but I feel very grateful,” Torres said.

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Manchester City's Omar Marmoush, left, fights for the ball with Team K-league's Moon Min Seo during a friendly soccer match in Seoul, South Korea. City won 3-1. (AP)

Sports

Arab Championship forces Kuwait Volleyball Association to revise calendar

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: The Kuwait Volleyball Association (KVA) has revised its competition calendar for the 2026-27 season after the Arab Volleyball Federation confirmed that the Arab Men's National Teams Championship will be staged in Bahrain from October 8 to 18.

The adjustment was made following an expanded meeting between KVA officials and representatives of participating clubs, during which the regulations, competition format, and organizational framework for the upcoming season were reviewed. The association agreed to reschedule domestic competitions to avoid a clash with the regional championship, despite having already approved the original season calendar.

The meeting was chaired by KVA Secretary-General Dhalal Al-Nimsh and attended by Competitions Committee Chairman Aref Al-Subaihi, Vice Chairman Dr. Jaber Al-Sharif, Committee Rapporteur Eng. Abdullah Al-Najdi, and representatives from the participating clubs.

Discussions focused on the competition regulations, tournament structure, and revised fixtures, while officials also outlined the technical and administrative arrangements for the new season to ensure the smooth organization of all competitions.

Club representatives were invited to present their observations and proposals on several regulatory matters, reflecting the association's commitment to working closely with clubs and developing a shared vision aimed at improving domestic volleyball competitions and ensuring a successful season.

The KVA is also considering staging a pre-season warm-up tournament before the Arab Championship to help clubs fine-tune their preparations ahead of the official start of the 2026-27 campaign.



Kuwait Volleyball Association meets clubs to discuss 2026-27 season plans.

Ex-FIFA VP Prince Ali cites 'blackmail' by Infantino-led body over unpaid prize money

'We did not endorse him before and certainly will not now'

GENEVA, Aug 5, (AP): Former FIFA vice president Prince Ali bin Al Hussein criticized the soccer body's leadership headed by Gianni Infantino, describing prize money withheld from his Jordan national team as a kind of blackmail.

Prince Ali said the Jordanian federation he leads still has not been paid money due for reaching the final of the FIFA Arab Cup played last December in Qatar.

In a social media post, Prince Ali said that during the World Cup - where Jordan made its debut in June - he was told if he endorsed FIFA President Gianni Infantino "it would go a long way to helping our FA out."

Infantino is under pressure to save his 11-year presidency amid a fierce backlash from global soccer leaders about his now-failed plan to sell a stake in future World Cup profits to investors led by Joshua Kushner.

"We pride ourselves in Jordan in upholding ethical values. We did not endorse him before and certainly will not now," said Prince



Prince Ali Al-Hussein, of Jordan, (left) with FIFA President Gianni Infantino.

Ali, who placed third in a five-candidate FIFA presidential contest when Infantino was first elected in February 2016.

"But the whole situation amounts to blackmail and we refuse to give in to that," the Jordanian royal wrote.

The 2025 FIFA Arab Cup that Jordan lost in the title match against Morocco was set to pay \$4.2 million to the beaten finalist, Jordanian media reported last year.

"The money our team should receive for having reached the final

has not been delivered yet," Prince Ali wrote, "while at the same time FIFA brags about how many billions they have in reserve."

"It is clear the problem really is with leadership. For months, FIFA has been refusing to help us on any of these or other matters," he said.

FIFA was approached for comment about the claims.

Prince Ali was elected by Asian soccer to serve on FIFA's ruling executive committee from 2011-15, and stood against then-president Sepp Blatter in a May 2015

election. That vote to re-elect Blatter was held in the shadow of raids at Zurich hotels two days earlier to arrest soccer officials as part of investigations by U.S. and Swiss federal agencies.

Infantino had seemed a lock to be re-elected unopposed for a fourth and final term leading FIFA through 2031 when he left New York two weeks after the World Cup final.

Fallout from his secretive private equity plan revealed one week ago has rocked soccer politics with Infantino's former colleagues at European soccer body UEFA now looking for a rival candidate. The proposal underwritten by Kushner's Thrive Eternal fund would have paid \$20 million each to Jordan and all other FIFA members had they accepted by a Sept. 19 deadline.

UEFA also is threatening a boycott of FIFA games, events and meetings, while the leadership of the North American soccer body CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation, of which Jordan is a member, also have spoken out against Infantino.

FIFA has set a Nov. 18 deadline for candidates to declare for the election by 211 member federations on March 18 in Rabat, Morocco.

Salah starts new chapter at Trabzonspor after Liverpool



Egyptian superstar Mohamed Salah

ISTANBUL, Aug 5: Turkish club Trabzonspor officially announced the arrival of Mohamed Salah, completing one of the biggest deals in Turkish football.

In a video shared on the club's official platforms, Salah appeared in Trabzonspor's dark blue jersey for the first time and delivered his opening message to the club's supporters: "Trabzon is everywhere for us!"

The club had earlier confirmed that it reached an agreement with the Egypt captain to join the squad on a two-year contract, reportedly worth €17 million per season, excluding bonuses and additional incentives.

Trabzonspor said Salah would arrive in Istanbul to finalize the transfer formalities and undergo medical examinations before his official

presentation to the fans.

The 34-year-old forward joins the Turkish club as a free agent after ending his successful nine-year career at Liverpool, where he established himself as one of the world's leading attacking players.

Salah received a massive welcome upon his arrival in Istanbul, with thousands of supporters gathering at Atatürk Airport to celebrate the signing. Fans waved flags, raised banners, and chanted in support of their new star, while local and international media closely followed the event.

The Egyptian captain acknowledged the enthusiastic reception, exchanging greetings with supporters amid tight security and organized crowd control measures.

Qadsia bolsters team with signing of Abdullah Al-Assaf

By Khaled Al-Enezi
Al-Seyassah/Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, Aug 5: Qadsia Club has stepped up its preparations for the 2026-27 volleyball season by completing the signing of experienced setter Abdullah Al-Assaf from Al-Arabi, reinforcing its squad ahead of the new domestic campaign.

Widely regarded as one of Kuwait's leading setters, Al-Assaf brings a wealth of experience and proven quality to the "Yellow Castle." His addition gives the coaching staff greater depth and flexibility as the club targets success across all local competitions. He began his career with Al-Tadamon before going on to represent several Kuwaiti clubs.

The move is part of Qadsia's ambitious recruitment drive aimed at strengthening the team's technical quality and building a balanced squad capable of competing for championships.

Qadsia has already been active in the transfer market, appointing head coach Humber Alejandro and assistant coach Diego, while also signing Beninese international Daouda Yacoubou and Kuwaiti player Yousef Mandil before securing Al-Assaf's services.

Elsewhere, Al-Nasr has launched its pre-season preparations under Montenegrin head coach Darko,



Abdullah Al-Assaf

with local players returning to daily training sessions.

The club has reinforced its roster with the arrivals of Cuban attacker Kely Bryant and Brazilian Renan Salton, in addition to local signings Jassim Al-Sabbagha and Mohammed Al-Ali.

Al-Nasr also renewed the contract of first-team manager Mohammed Al-Daihani, who said the club is determined to deliver a strong campaign and challenge for domestic titles during the 2026-27 season.

Reusser keeps yellow jersey

Vollering wins 5th stage of Women's Tour

BELLEVILLE-EN-BEAUJOLAIS, France, Aug 5, (AP): Demi Vollering crowned a battling performance by winning the fifth stage of the Women's Tour de France on Wednesday while Marlen Reusser kept pace to keep the yellow jersey.

Vollering, the 2023 Tour champion, attacked on both of the last two categorized climbs and she kept enough in reserve to beat Reusser and Poland's Katarzyna Niewiadoma-Phinney in a three-way dash for the line.

The Dutch rider won her first stage of this Tour and stayed in contention for the general classification.

Swiss rider Reusser, the world time trial champion who seized the yellow jersey the day before, still leads by 12 seconds from Vollering, with Niewiadoma-Phinney third, 1 minute and 17 seconds behind.

Wednesday's stage was a challenging 140-kilometer (87-mile) trek up and down between Mâcon and the finish in Belleville-en-Beaujolais.

The climbs took their toll with Marianne Vos among the dropped riders early on.

Puck Pieterse was first over the first four climbs and secured the polka dot jersey for the "Queen of the Mountains" when she crested the category 3 Col de Fontmartin. It gave the Dutch rider a 16-point



Demi Vollering

lead over Nikola Nosková with just 15 left to win.

Lorena Wiebes, who won the Tour's first two stages, was dropped going up the Col de Fontmartin, but she won the intermediate sprint to fasten her hold on the green jersey for points.

A 19-woman breakaway tackled the category 2 Col de Gerbet, where they faced 4.6 kilometers at an average gradient of 6.5%, eking out an advantage of nearly 1½ minutes over the peloton featuring Reusser and Vollering.

Pieterse was also first to the top, stretching her lead in the mountains classification to 23 points.

With 50 kilometers to go, the leading riders had stretched their advantage to around 1 minute, 50 seconds, but it was down to 1:20 some 15 kilometers later and it continued to shrink as they ascended the Col de Durbize, the penultimate climb of the day.

Swiss rider Noemi Rungg veered into the path of a passing service motorbike and was clipped, sending her crashing to the road.

Vollering attacked 700 meters

from the summit of the the Col de Durbize, followed by Bella Holmgren, Niewiadoma-Phinney and Reusser, while defending champion Pauline Ferrand-Prévot was unable to keep up. They joined the leaders with 22 kilometers to go.

Vollering attacked again on Mont Brouilly, with just Reusser and Niewiadoma-Phinney still with her by the summit. They had a sizable advantage over their rivals going into the last five kilometers.

Niewiadoma-Phinney attacked with 320 meters remaining when Reusser and Vollering appeared surprised to see the Polish rider speed off, but they both recovered and Vollering just pulled ahead of her rivals at the finish.

This edition of the race, the fifth of the Women's Tour, covers 1,175 kilometers (730 miles) over nine days.

Stage six is another demanding mid-mountain stage ending in Tournon-sur-Rhône before Friday's anticipated mountaintop finish on Mont Ventoux.